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POLLYANNA'S
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JEWELS

BY

HARRIET LUMMIS SMITH

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POLLYANNA'S JEWELS

CHAPTER I

WHEN THE WORST WAS OVER

When the men had finished crating the furniture, and the china had been packed away in sugar barrels, and the pictures were coffined in dry-goods boxes of assorted sizes, and the house suggested a skeleton, picked clean, Pollyanna had assured herself that the worst was over. She had said the same thing the next day when they moved in to the new home; when barricades of furniture made progress from room to room as noteworthy an achievement as Napoleon's crossing the Alps; when it was discovered that the moving men had carried all the kitchen utensils to the third floor; and when, at six o'clock at night, the beds, on which the family were to sleep, still leaned drunkenly against the walls. And now, twenty hours later, she consoled herself with the reflection, "Well, it won't be so bad tomorrow."

It was a fact that much had been accomplished

in twenty hours. The beds stood up straight and brazen on the bare floors, apparently trying to wipe out the recollection of their recent inebriety. Chairs, released from the confining crates, stood about in huddled groups, as if asking one another how long this sort of thing was likely to last. There were dishes on the shelves of the china closet, and all the available space in the kitchen was occupied by pots and pans, while in the cellar a magnificent pile of prospective kindling-wood grew apace.

Jimmy was not to report to his new headquarters till Monday, and, with characteristic energy, he was devoting himself to helping get the house in order. It was a tremendous help, of course, and Pollyanna was deeply appreciative; but she sometimes wished that Jimmy had a little more initiative in the matter of finding things. It seemed to her that, without exaggeration, half her time was spent hunting for something Jimmy wanted.

"Pollyanna!" The summons reached her as she stood on the top of the stepladder, putting some tumblers of jelly on a high shelf, where James Junior could not find them. "Pollyanna, where the deuce is the hammer?"

"The hammer? Why, it was on top of the piano a little while ago."

"Well, it's not there now. It's the most extraordinary thing," declared Jimmy, impressively, "the

way things disappear in this house. A fellow could accomplish twice as much if he didn't have to spend most of his time hunting."

Pollyanna climbed down from the stepladder and went to her husband's aid. There were times when there seemed some ground for Jimmy's implied theory that hammers and other necessary articles simply walked off and hid themselves, when one's back was turned. They hunted unsuccessfully for ten minutes, and then Pollyanna found the hammer by the merest accident. For, noticing Junior's rubber boots standing in the middle of the hall, as if ready to start off on an independent journey, she picked them up to get them out of the way, and discovered that one of the pair was suspiciously heavy. Having had experience with such mysteries, Pollyanna was not surprised to find the hammer inside.

"Well!" Jimmy's tone implied that the puzzle must be solved at once. "How did that get there?"

"Why, perhaps—"

"Have the children been downstairs? It's exactly like one of Junior's tricks."

"No. Nancy has the children in the front room upstairs, and the door is shut."

"But somebody must have done it. Polly-

anna." Jimmy spoke very earnestly. "I'll swear I didn't. But it stands to reason that a hammer can't jump off the top of the piano and hide itself in a rubber boot."

"Perhaps you laid it on that pile of sofa pillows, Jimmy. They're such slippery things. And the boot happened to stand just where it would catch the hammer when it slipped off."

Jimmy took the captured hammer without comment, but shaking his head stubbornly, as if to imply that, though this explanation might satisfy some intellects, it was far from being enough for him, while Pollyanna carried the rubber boots upstairs and shut them up in a closet as a punishment for their misconduct. And then, though she knew she had no time to spare, she indulged herself in a peep into the front room, set apart for a nursery, where Nancy was keeping guard over the children.

A year before, Nancy's husband, Timothy, had died suddenly, and, the day after the funeral, Nancy herself had suggested giving up her home and coming to live with Pollyanna.

"I never had no children, Miss Pollyanna, but if I had, it don't seem as if I could have set any more store by 'em than I do by you. And the way hired girls act nowadays, wastin' till it's 'most as bad as stealin', and doin' something

they hadn't ought to the minute your back's turned, I'd feel easier in my mind about you if I jest picked up and went and worked for you myself."

"But, Nancy," Pollyanna had cried, holding the work-hardened hand tightly in both her own, "of course it would be perfectly wonderful for me to have you, but you must think of what is best for yourself. There's lots of work in a family where there are little children. I know Timothy left you something, and that it's not necessary for you to work so hard."

"Well, Miss Pollyanna, maybe it isn't necessary, but I guess hard work's the best medicine for what ails me. And besides, workin' for you and your'n ain't like workin' jest for money. It ain't, it ain't."

"Nancy, do you realize that it would mean leaving Beldingsville? Are you sure you want to do that?"

Nancy smiled sadly.

"I guess the only part of Beldingsville that meant much to me was my own little home, and, now that Timothy's gone, it's only a jumble of rooms, with some sticks of furniture settin' around. If I can be with you, Miss Pollyanna, and Mr. Jimmy and the children, I ain't a-goin' to miss Beldingsville."

And so, for a year, Pollyanna's burdens had been lightened by this staunch helper, who assumed the interests and responsibilities of a member of the family. There were, of course, the inevitable drawbacks. In her determination that Miss Pollyanna should not be cheated out of her eye-teeth by unscrupulous city dealers, Nancy quarreled with icemen and milkmen, butchers and grocers, and it was difficult to keep a laundress, owing to Nancy's uncomplimentary comments on the quality and quantity of the day's work; but, with it all, Nancy's presence in her home gave Pollyanna a grateful sense of security.

Pollyanna stood for a moment at the door of the front room, listening to the chirping voices within. Early in the day she had decided that it would save time to assign to one person the task of looking after the children. When Junior fell over a packing-box and bumped his head, and when little Pollyanna mounted to the very top of the stepladder and called, "See me fly," and when, for a moment, there was an agonizing uncertainty as to whether or not the baby had swallowed a tack, Pollyanna and Jimmy and Nancy all came running from different parts of the house and spent a number of minutes satisfying themselves that no serious harm had

been done. As a mere matter of economizing of time, to say nothing of the saving of the nerves, it paid to shut the children up in one room, and appoint someone to act as guardian. Pollyanna had taken her turn earlier, and now Nancy was sitting comfortably in the rocking chair, keeping an eye on two restless sprites, while she darned an ugly tear in Junior's trousers, due to a projecting nail in a packing-box downstairs.

The children abandoned their toys, shrieking rapturously as their mother entered. Even the baby, who had not as yet mastered the intricate art of walking, pulled herself to her wobbly little feet, holding to the side of her baby-pen, and grinned engagingly.

Pollyanna had confided to Jimmy more than once that she should be frightfully jealous of anyone whom the children found so entertaining that they would fail to go into ecstasies when she put in her appearance. On this occasion she had nothing to complain of. Junior seized one of her hands and his small sister the other, while across the room the baby gurgled joyously, and showed the two tiny teeth of which she was inordinately proud.

"This is my hand," shouted Junior, hugging his mother's fingers to his heart and casting an impish glance in his sister's direction.

"I've got a hand, too, and it's got a ring on it."

"Well, anyway, this is the hand she shakes with—and spanks."

Junior had suffered from the usual juvenile uncertainty as to which hand to offer in greeting, and, having mastered the lesson, improved every opportunity to parade his knowledge.

As his mother seated herself and picked up the baby, Junior inquired anxiously, "Can Nancy go now, mother, and let you take care of us?"

"Not yet. I have some more work to do."

"But you've been gone a long time."

"Not nearly long enough," said Pollyanna firmly. "I just stopped a minute to see if you'd been good."

This was Nancy's cue. She answered after a discreet interval of reflection, "Well, fair to middlin', Miss Pollyanna. A little while ago Junior pulled Judy's hair."

Pollyanna's daughter, also Pollyanna, had never been called by that name. At a very early age Junior had objected to it, declaring that his "teef" were too little to say such big words. Indeed the others found it easier to address the tiny newcomer as "darling" and "sweetness" and by other titles too primitive to be captured by the alphabet. Then Judith

Thayer, on one of her flying visits, had made a pretense of complaining because the baby had not been given her name, and had begun to call her "Judy," a title Junior promptly adopted. There must be something peculiarly contagious in nicknames. While Pollyanna and Jimmy were waiting for Junior to forget the label he had attached to his baby sister, unconsciously they began to make use of it. For the present Judy was Judy as if the name had been bestowed upon her in baptism.

"Pull Judy's hair!" Pollyanna was properly shocked. "Oh, Junior! I thought you were going to help mother by being so good today."

"But I did it to help you, Mother," Junior explained hurriedly. "I did it to straighten out the curl, so 't'wouldn't be so hard to comb."

"Why, Junior, that would almost break mother's heart," and Pollyanna laid her hand caressingly on Judy's curly head. Many a mother sees her dreams fulfilled in her children, and the shining black curls Pollyanna had wished for herself, as a heavenly possession, had become a joy in this world, no less a joy because they grew on the head of her little daughter instead of on her own.

Nancy had not yet concluded her report. "I guess Judy's a little mite homesick. A while

ago she said she wanted to go home, and, when I told her this was home, she cried."

"Why, darling!" Pollyanna freed one arm and drew the little girl closer. "You wouldn't want to go back where we used to live and leave daddy and mother and brother and little sister and Nancy here, would you?"

Judy seemed undecided. "No-o-o," she said at last. "But I don't like houses th'out any clothes on."

Pollyanna looked about the bare, comfortless room and smiled. "I know, dear, but we're dressing up the rooms as fast as we can and pretty soon this will be our dear home."

From the hall below Jimmy's voice rose in accents of desperation. "Pollyanna, is there such a thing as a broom in this house?"

"Why, of course; several of them."

"Well, you'd better come down and find at least one. I've looked everywhere. The screws came out when I was putting up the picture, and the whole first floor is strewn with bits of glass."

"Coming," Pollyanna called gaily. She kissed the baby and returned her to her pen, then started for the door, delaying just a moment to answer one of Junior's questions. Junior had a way of shouting startling questions at one,

apropos of nothing, that was a bit disconcerting.

"Mother, would God stand in a cyclone?"

Pollyanna was laughing as she went downstairs. She was rather exceptional among young mothers, in that she was seldom too busy to enjoy her children. Even today, with pictures leaning against the walls, and books piled in the corners, and the baby's high chair buried under a pile of rugs, five minutes with the children had refreshed her and given her renewed energy with which to attack the disorder.

She found the broom for Jimmy and the dust pan as well, then told him of Junior's latest, and Jimmy chuckled as he swept up bits of glass.

"A week or two ago, when we were having a thunder storm, he asked me why God had to make such terrible noise when He wanted it to rain. I don't mean it boastfully, but, Pollyanna, take it from me, we've got some awfully bright kids. Sometimes I used to feel sorry for poor old Watson—you remember Watson. He'd come down to the office and tell the smart sayings of his youngsters and bore everybody to death. Queer how some people get the idea that their children are perfect wonders."

Pollyanna discreetly ducked into an empty barrel and hid her smile in the darkness.

"I suppose children always seem wonderful to

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their parents," she suggested from the barrel's depths.

"Looks that way, but it seems to me that, if one of our children was as stupid as Watson's kids, I'd know it fast enough. Thank the Lord we don't have to worry on that score. Where did you say this little bookcase was to go?"

Pollyanna saw that it had never occurred to him to take her remark to himself, and she loved him the better for it.

It was long past their usual bedtime when they decided to call it a day. The children had been asleep for hours, and Nancy, yielding to Pollyanna's stern command, had, some time before, gone to her room in the third story. Most of the furniture was in its rightful place, the bookcases were partially filled, and a number of pictures hung on the walls. Pollyanna had dark circles under her eyes and her tired feet dragged as she went from room to room. Even Jimmy declared that a few more such days would lay him out.

Pollyanna was asleep two minutes after her head touched the pillow; but, as a delicious, submerging wave of drowsiness swept over her, she struggled to the surface long enough to say, "Well, anyway, dear, we can feel that now the worst is over."

CHAPTER II

NEIGHBORS

The new home was in a new development of a Boston suburb. Everything about it was so bright and shining and modern as to suggest that it had sprung up over-night, like a mushroom. All the houses in Elsinore Terrace had breakfast nooks, and the paint was so fresh that one who touched it instinctively looked at his fingers to see if it had come off. The lawns were even newer than the houses, and, like all infants, required a great deal of care. The shade trees, placed at regular intervals along the side-walk, one to each house, were far too new to more than promise shade sometime in the future.

Most of the houses, Pollyanna soon learned, were occupied by young people and many of them had little families. When all the children of the neighborhood appeared on the street at the same time, it looked as if school had just let out, kindergarten pupils predominating. Junior and Judy were agreeably thrilled by the discovery of so many playmates within easy reach,

but their mother's enthusiasm had its reservations. Pollyanna had no wish to bring up her children in isolation. Companionship with other little folks, their normal contact with the outside world, was a necessary part of their training. But, at the same time, the fact that children lived next door was not enough to prove them desirable associates, though such proximity made companionship almost inevitable.

As it happened, there were children in both the adjoining houses, and, from the characteristics of the children, Pollyanna acquired considerable information regarding the mothers before she had seen either.

Little Jack Warner, whom some juvenile humorist of the neighborhood had christened Jack Horner, and who was seldom called anything else, was suspiciously spick and span. His clothes were always clean and not even wrinkled, his face and hands so immaculate that Pollyanna felt certain his mother must call him indoors and give him a thorough washing at least once every half hour.

The house on the other side was occupied by a family named Hunt, and it took some time for Pollyanna to reach a conclusion as to its number, as the Hunt back yard was generally full of children. Relying on circumstantial evi-

dence alone, Pollyanna would have estimated the young Hunts to number anywhere from ten to twenty. She learned, in course of time, that there were five of them, and the quality of Mrs. Hunt's discipline was indicated by a set speech Pollyanna heard called from the back door, or an upstairs window, with wearisome frequency.

"Children, stop, stop right away! When your father comes home I'm going to tell him how naughty you've been, and he'll give you all a whipping."

"Nice for Hunt, isn't it?" growled Jimmy, when Pollyanna enlightened him as to Mrs. Hunt's method. "If she keeps her word, his evenings must be restful and pleasant, and think how his children must look forward to his coming home at night! I don't mean to shirk my share in bringing up my family," declared Jimmy, passing from irony to profound earnestness, "but I'll be hanged if I want my children to look on me as a special policeman."

Pollyanna's first acquaintance among her new neighbors was a Mrs. McGill, whose back yard joined hers. She stepped out into the sunshine one morning to hang the baby's washing on the line, when a pleasant voice addressed her across the boundary hedge.

"I'm going to take time by the forelock and introduce myself," said the voice. "I'm one of your new neighbors, Mrs. McGill."

Pollyanna dropped the baby's things upon the grass, and, approaching the hedge, extended her hand.

"I'm Mrs. Pendleton," she smiled.

"I'm very glad to meet you, Mrs. Pendleton, though I don't dare to shake hands. I've been grubbing in the flower beds, and my hands are frightfully dirty."

"And mine are wet," laughed Pollyanna. "I suppose a hand-shake would mean a mud-pie."

"Don't some of the oriental peoples greet you by shaking their hands instead of yours?" asked Mrs. McGill. She clasped her earth-stained fingers, made the gesture charmingly, and then went on to say, "I know, of course, that you've just moved in and everything must be at sixes and sevens, but would a few flowers be in your way?"

Pollyanna beamed at her.

"I can't imagine flowers being in the way—ever."

"Then I'm going to cut you a few while you finish hanging up your clothes. And you must let me share my garden with you this summer,

since you've come too late to have your own."

"The lateness will do for an excuse," explained Pollyanna, "but I'm not sure it will be any better another year. We never have much success with gardens," she continued ruefully. "The children always forget and trample over the flower beds after the things get started—that is if they ever do start. Junior is so anxious to see what the seeds are doing that he generally digs them up two or three times a day. We really congratulate ourselves that we can keep the grass growing."

"I haven't that difficulty," said Mrs. McGill. "I have no children, so I have time for my flowers and my music and everything else that interests me, especially since I lost my husband."

She was still smiling, but a poignant note had come into her beautiful voice, and Pollyanna looked at her with a vague stirring of sympathy. She was a woman older than herself, not less than forty, rather handsome, and somehow giving in every movement an indefinable impression of efficiency. Pollyanna was at once convinced that she was going to find Mrs. McGill a most enjoyable neighbor.

More to prolong the conversation than from curiosity she inquired, "You sing, don't you?"

"Yes, systematically. I have a church position."

"I hope you'll leave your window up when you practise."

"What a sweet neighbor you're going to be," laughed Mrs. McGill. "I had an idea that I would like you, and that speech settles it. Now don't let me interrupt you a minute longer, for I know how busy you must be."

And, when Pollyanna had finished hanging the tiny garments on the line, a big bunch of flowers was awaiting her.

"It's the most neighborly neighborhood you can imagine," Pollyanna informed Jimmy. "You see, it makes it awfully easy to get acquainted, because if one of the children is hurt and begins to cry, all the mothers rush out, each one thinking it's her child, you know, and, when we've got that straightened out, we all get to talking, and everyone is so friendly. You remember that winter I spent with Aunt Ruth when I was a little girl?"

Jimmy nodded, without speaking. Whatever he forgot in the days to come, he was sure to remember that winter.

"Well, Aunt Ruth did her best to impress me with the idea that Bostonians are very, very formal, and the impression must have gone deep,

for, when I found we were going to live in a suburb of Boston, I felt quite nervous. I was afraid we'd find our new neighbors rather stand-offish."

"I dare say very few of our neighbors are Simon-pure Bostonians, any more than we are," Jimmy answered. "The traditions of cities are likely to get a little mixed, in this whirl-a-gig age. And Aunt Ruth, though she's a dear, would probably find people in any part of the world rather formal," he added, with a smile.

"I suppose so, she's so dignified. And I've never been able to acquire any dignity, no matter how hard I tried. As long as I'm the sort of person I am," Pollyanna ended, with a sigh of satisfaction, "it's lucky for me that Elsinore Terrace is such a friendly street."

But the friendliness of the Terrace was not without discrimination, Pollyanna was soon to learn. About a week later she gave Junior permission to go into the next yard, where a swing had just been put up for Jack Horner. The two were gradually joined by other children of the neighborhood, including four of the five Hunts, and presently the assembly became so boisterous that Pollyanna thought it the part of wisdom to view the fun at close range.

The children were playing amiably enough, if

noisily, and, having satisfied herself that there was no need to enact the rôle of wet blanket, Pollyanna stood watching them with genuine enjoyment. Presently she became aware of a new arrival, apparently, like herself, attracted to the hilarious scene by the uproar. He was a child she did not remember ever having seen before, noticeably well-dressed and with a rather shy manner. He advanced toward the absorbed group almost stealthily, and was close upon them before he was discovered.

Jack Horner was the first to notice him. At once he left his play and advanced upon the newcomer, his manner threatening. The other children turned to look and, under their united gaze, the little intruder drew back; not far enough, however, to satisfy Jack Horner.

"What you doin' in my yard?" he shouted. "You get out o' here, or I'll make you."

Pollyanna, whose instinct made her the ally of every creature in distress, ran down the steps, from the top of which she had seen Jack's welcome to his visitor.

"Jack," she called. "Come here a minute, Jack dear."

She was about to give him some elemental instruction in the social amenities, as she would have given Junior in a like case; but, before

she had succeeded in attracting Jack's attention, Mrs. Warner appeared on the scene, and Pollyanna gladly left to her the enlightenment of her small son.

But it was to the other boy, and not to Jack, that Mrs. Warner addressed herself, and her deliberate, incisive voice made Pollyanna wince. She could not imagine speaking to a child with such frigid coldness.

"Philip!" said Mrs. Warner. "Don't you know you are not allowed to play here?"

The child's answer was to take to his heels. He ran with the desperate haste of a hunted creature, and Pollyanna stood looking after him, curiously perturbed. Undoubtedly Philip was a very naughty little boy, to be ordered off with such scant ceremony; but, after all, he was scarcely older than Junior, and it seemed an exaggeration to treat him as a hardened offender.

With the callousness of their years, the other children at once resumed their play, and, as Pollyanna stood gazing after the fugitive, she discovered that Mrs. Warner had come down to the hedge, evidently to speak to her. Forcing a rather mechanical smile to her lips, Pollyanna came forward.

"I thought I'd explain about that little boy,"

Mrs. Warner said in a carefully lowered voice, though Jack and his friends were making such an uproar that it was impossible for her to be overheard. "Unless you're careful, he'll be trying to play with your children. He's very obtrusive, as you saw just now."

Pollyanna failed to see why the child in question was any more obtrusive than any of the others.

"Is he so very naughty?" she asked.

"Well—I've never seen enough of him to know. But he comes from the house on the corner."

Pollyanna was frankly bewildered. It was hard to see why any especial opprobium should attach to a corner house, yet that was what Mrs. Warner seemed to imply. Meeting her blank gaze, Mrs. Warner smiled.

"I forgot you were so new here," she said. "Of course you wouldn't understand. But here on Elsinore Terrace the corner house is our skeleton in the closet."

"Oh, dear! Then we have a skeleton," exclaimed Pollyanna. "I'm so sorry."

"It's an outrage that such people should ever have got into our neighborhood," cried Mrs. Warner vehemently. "And the worst of it is

that most of us own our homes and have to stay on, even if we do have disreputable neighbors."

"Disreputable!"

"That's a mild word for it. Both the man and the woman abandoned families to run away together. They say she left three little girls. Of course, when they came, none of us knew their record, and we would have treated them like any other newcomers if, by good luck, someone hadn't visited here who knew the whole story. Of course we've all ignored their existence ever since, but apparently she's one of the brazen sort and doesn't care."

"Poor little thing!" Pollyanna cried involuntarily, and Mrs. Warner jumped. Then she realized that Pollyanna was thinking of Philip, and not of Philip's mother, and showed immediate relief.

"Yes, of course it's hard on the boy. But we couldn't have him playing with our little folks. It's enough of a problem with the children who come from respectable homes."

"I suppose so," Pollyanna sighed, but her heart was heavy.

Jimmy was becoming acquainted, by proxy, with Elsinore Terrace. His new work was exacting. He left home early and often was not

back till late, so that the task of enlightening him regarding his new neighbors devolved on Pollyanna. That evening, when she told him of the people in the corner house, and of the little boy who had run away, her voice made him think of music, full of minor cadences.

A silence fell between them when she finished, broken at last by Junior, who shrieked over the bannisters, "Mother, I want to know something."

"Why, Junior, I thought you were asleep. Run right back to bed."

"But, Mother, tell me something first. Are the little boys in China going to bed now?"

"I suppose so. Oh, no! I forgot. It's morning in China."

"Then I tell you what I'm going to do when I get big, like Daddy. I'm going to dig a hole clear through to China, 'n' every night I'll go down there 'n' it'll be morning. Then, when it gets night there, I'll climb back here and it'll be morning, too. Then I won't never have to go to bed."

"Well, until you get that hole finished, you must go to bed and stay abed," Pollyanna replied with decision. She listened to the sound of his scampering feet and then the smile, with which she met Jimmy's eyes, trembled into a

sigh. "He's hardly any older than Junior," she said.

Jimmy understood that she referred to Philip and, knowing Pollyanna as he did, readily divined the trend of her thoughts. "It's tough for the poor little chap," he said gently; "but, at the same time, we can hardly be his champions at the children's expense."

Pollyanna did not answer, and he continued. "Apparently, to allow Philip the freedom of our place, with the feeling in the neighborhood what it is, would mean cutting our children off from all other companions, and it wouldn't be fair. After all, we must think of them first. If we stay here for ten or fifteen years, their earliest companionships are going to count a great deal. And then, Pollyanna, we don't even know that this poor little cuss is the sort of child we want Junior to associate with. Considering the home he comes from, it's hardly likely."

"I suppose you're right, dear." Pollyanna's voice was not quite steady. "But he's so little."

"I know. It's a pretty grim law that visits the sins of the fathers on the children. The only good thing about it, as far as I know, is that, if a man's got a particle of decency in him, it will help him to walk the chalk line when he remembers that, if he goes wrong, his children

will have to foot the bills. Now let's talk of something pleasanter. Did Aunt Polly's letter come today?"

The conversation, so abruptly changed, ran on cheerily till bedtime. Philip was not mentioned again; but Pollyanna's dreams that night were haunted by a forlorn little figure, shut out from the friendliness of the neighborhood, suffering for sins not his own.

CHAPTER III

IT NEVER RAINS BUT IT POURS

EVERY mother, even though she be argus-eyed, is bound to make many astonishing discoveries about her children. Pollyanna had watched over Junior solicitously since the hour he was born, yet every now and then he took her breath away by exhibiting some characteristic she would have sworn was absolutely foreign to his nature. One of these disagreeable surprises came the morning of a busy day when Jimmy had arranged to bring a friend home to dinner, a young man named Lindsay, a stranger in the city and so extremely shy that, if left to himself, he seemed likely to remain a stranger indefinitely.

Pollyanna was in the kitchen helping Nancy with the dessert, when a chorus of shrill voices claimed her attention.

"It's your turn, Junior," Jack Horner was shouting above the racket. "Go ahead!" And Junior answered, stammering a little, as he sometimes did when very much excited, "M-my stone ain't b-big enough."

Pollyanna dropped her egg-beater. A very small stone in Junior's hand was big enough to do deadly execution. He seldom hit what he aimed at, to be sure, but he had the knack of hitting something, a neighbor's window or a jardinière or a bottle of milk. Darting out on the back porch, Pollyanna saw a little group of boys gathered about Junior, who, with upraised arm, was taking very deliberate aim. Pollyanna's eyes followed his and found his target, a miserable, half-starved kitten, sitting under a rosebush in Mrs. McGill's garden, and washing its face, with that pathetic passion for cleanliness in which the cat tribe leads all living creatures, mankind included.

As a rule, Pollyanna was not inclined to exaggerate Junior's misdemeanors. It did not surprise her particularly when he told a lie, for she had observed that well-meaning adults sometimes took liberties with the truth, to avoid inconvenience or embarrassment. His occasional disobediences were, in her opinion, to be expected, since the desire to have one's own way is deeply implanted in human nature. But never for a moment had she dreamed that a child of hers could be cruel.

After all his pains, Junior's aim was spoiled when a hand, gripping his arm, jerked him back-

ward. The stone dropped from his momentarily paralyzed fingers, and, squirming around, he looked into the sternest pair of eyes he had ever faced.

"Junior," said Pollyanna, and her voice matched her eyes. "Go into the house and go to bed."

It was a terrible punishment. Pollyanna had once confided to Jimmy her belief that Junior would rather be spanked every hour of the twenty-four than spend the day in bed, even if he were allowed to amuse himself with his toys. Junior did not cry easily; but, as his mother delivered this fearful edict, he burst into a protesting roar.

"Mother, don't make me! I'll be good."

"Do as I tell you, Junior. Unless you mind promptly I shall keep you in bed the rest of the day."

Howling in a manner which suggested excruciating suffering, Junior started toward the house, but Jack Horner interposed in his defense.

"T'ain't anybody's cat, Mrs. Pendleton. I mean—t'ain't nobody's. It's just a stray."

"And you think that is an excuse for being cruel, do you, Jack? I'm ashamed of you."

The boys exchanged significant glances and the discomfited group melted away, while, in

the shade of the rosebush, the scrawny kitten finished its toilet unmolested.

Busy as her day was, Pollyanna gave considerable thought to Junior's self-revelation. She did not intend to share her conclusions with Jimmy in the presence of their guest, but Junior's unnaturally subdued demeanor had at once aroused his father's suspicions, and, after the children had gone upstairs, he inquired casually, "What's Junior been up to?"

Pollyanna's explanation lacked the twinkle which usually accompanied such a recital, and, seeing that she took the matter seriously, Jimmy essayed comfort.

"Well, dear, don't take it too much to heart. Of course all boys are little savages, but most of them outgrow it."

"I can't say that Junior is a savage," objected Pollyanna. "As a rule he's very gentle and sympathetic. He is much more likely to cry when Judy is hurt than when he hurts himself. In fact," she ended surprisingly, "I take the blame for what happened today."

"You do? Then I suppose it's up to me to think of a suitable punishment."

Pollyanna was too much in earnest to pay the wifely tribute of a smile.

"Junior wouldn't have thought of doing what

he did today, if he'd had a chance to get acquainted with animals. Of course he learned their names from his blocks when he was a baby, and he's found out something about their habits from stories, but he's never had any real contact with them, so as to find out that they are creatures that can feel and love and suffer. That wretched kitten was simply a more interesting target than a milk bottle. But, if he'd ever had a pet kitten, he'd have been full of sympathy for the poor little waif."

"Probably he'd have wanted to adopt it," suggested Jimmy.

"Very likely. I suppose I must have driven Aunt Polly nearly crazy, bringing home stray animals. That isn't always convenient, but I prefer it to cruelty."

And then Pollyanna turned apologetically to her guest.

"Oh, Mr. Lindsay, please excuse this long dissertation on child training."

"I've been very much interested," the young man replied, with his shy smile. "One thing is certain, Mrs. Pendleton. A boy never gets as much happiness out of anything as out of the companionship of a dog. I've been a boy and I know."

The next day, as it happened, Pollyanna had

an excellent opportunity to air her newly formulated theories. For Jack Horner had given his mother a vivid account of Junior's disgrace, and, at one of the gatherings which Jimmy facetiously referred to as a Mother's Meeting, Mrs. Warner mentioned the incident apologetically. As a matter of fact, Jack was several years older than Junior, and even his mother realized his culpability.

"Boys are so unfeeling," she cried.

"I believe it's more our fault than theirs," objected Pollyanna, and proceeded to enlarge upon her theme as she had done the previous evening; but, in her present audience, she found few supporters.

"Oh, my dear!" protested Mrs. Warner. "Don't you know that cats and dogs bring all sorts of germs into the house? It's a hard enough fight to keep the children well, without that."

"Well, I don't know any way to avoid germs except to be disinfected, and then hermetically sealed," remarked Pollyanna. "As long as the air is full of them, why worry about the few extra ones on a kitten?"

"But they make so much work," expostulated a young matron by the name of Wilkins.

Mrs. Wilkins had one child, an almost pain-

fully proper little girl, whose chief enjoyment in her toys seemed to consist in picking them up and putting them away. As Mrs. Wilkins was continually boasting of her competent servant, Pollyanna wondered why she should object so strongly to everything that entailed work.

"The worst of having pets," drawled Mrs. Hunt, "is that they're always dying and then the children's hearts are broken. My experience is that they get more sorrow out of it than they do pleasure."

It was hardly a surprise to Pollyanna to learn that the Hunt's pets were short-lived. In the Hunt household the meals were movable feasts, likely to occur at any hour, or to be omitted altogether. The latter alternative was made possible by the fact that, at any time of day, some one of the five young Hunts was sure to be munching something. Bedtime, too, was an indefinite period, and on several occasions Pollyanna had been roused from her first sound sleep of the night by the penetrating voices of the Hunt children, who had not yet retired. These haphazard methods, applied to creatures without language to voice their needs, might easily result, Pollyanna saw, in their premature demise. And so, though surprised at the unpopu-

larity of her suggestion, Pollyanna did not relinquish her purpose.

Jimmy, too, thought well of the idea. Not only would the children derive great pleasure from having a pet; but, as Pollyanna had said, it would be a continual object-lesson in kindness to animals. And when, one afternoon, Jimmy found himself in the vicinity of a pet-shop, one window of which was occupied by a litter of puppies, while, in the other, a cage of monkeys had attracted the usual circle of onlookers, it occurred to him that this was the place he had unconsciously been looking for. His work was over for the day and he walked in.

The pet-shop proved a distractingly noisy place. The monkeys were chattering uninterruptedly, punctuating their remarks by an occasional shrill squeal; several dogs in the rear kept up a nervous barking; and a grey parrot, with a wicked eye, added its mite to the general tumult. Jimmy paused by its perch.

"Pretty Poll," he said tentatively.

"Oh, shucks!" cried the parrot, and broke into a cackling laugh, like the laughter of a very old man, then changed with uncanny suddenness to the wailing of an infant.

The proprietor, seeing Jimmy's interest, approached, but Jimmy shook his head.

"We hear enough of that already at our house," he explained. "I've three children at home."

The proprietor was sympathetic. He suggested that the children might enjoy a monkey; but, while Jimmy did not doubt that in the least, he knew that there were limits to even Pollyanna's forbearance. He vetoed goldfish as too stupid. Some rabbits appealed to him strongly; but the cold weather was not far away, and he decided that a house pet would give the children greater enjoyment. A grey squirrel had an excellent chance for his vote; but, as he discussed prices with the proprietor, he carelessly rested his hand against the wires and the squirrel promptly bit him. Jimmy wound his handkerchief around the bleeding finger and looked further. In one of the rear windows of the shop, in a contracted wooden cage, a little yellow canary was singing away for dear life, and, at the first sight of it, Jimmy knew it was exactly what he wanted.

"You're Pollyanna's bird all right," he said, addressing the canary. "If she wore feathers and was cooped up in a cage, that's just the way she would act."

And then he asked the proprietor the price, and the proprietor, seeing that Jimmy had made

up his mind, added a dollar to what he would have asked had Jimmy seemed uncertain.

Jimmy had the canary transferred from the wooden cage to one that glittered like gold, and boasted a number of perches, and then he carried off his big package, mentally picturing the children's excitement on his arrival.

His anticipation fell short of the reality, if anything, though he did not prove the center of the excitement, as he had fully expected. Judy was the first of the family to discover his approach, and she rushed to open the door before he could insert his latch-key.

"Daddy," she squealed, spinning about him like a dancing dervish, "Guess what we've got. Guess!"

Junior rushed in from the kitchen.

"Yes, we've got something, Daddy. It's not a new baby," he interjected, as if to guard his father against possible disappointment. "Guess what it is."

Pollyanna's appearance on the scene prevented his compliance with this repeated request.

"How early you are, dear," she exclaimed, and then, as her gaze fell on his ungainly package, "Why, Jimmy, what is that?"

"I'm glad to find that someone in the family

has a little curiosity," said Jimmy in a tone of injury. "The children didn't even notice. What's wrong with 'em?"

"You see they're so excited."

"No, I don't see. What are they excited about?"

"Don't tell him, Mother," Junior shrieked. "Daddy's got to guess what we've got."

"A boa constrictor."

The peals of laughter greeting this humorous effort were enough to confirm Jimmy's already good opinion of his wit. In spite of the disadvantage of not having any idea of what the word boa constrictor meant, Judy laughed as loudly as the others.

"Daddy's a funny man," she remarked patronizingly, " to call a nice little kitty such queer names."

"There, now, you've told him!" Junior sputtered disgustedly.

"I didn't, did I, Muvver?"

"Sh! It doesn't matter. What do you suppose is in that queer bundle of Daddy's?"

A spirited guessing contest ensued. Quite forgetting their own secret, the children hazarded all sorts of conjectures, until a pleasing interrogative sound from behind the brown paper led Junior to express the belief that the

package contained a chicken. And, thinking this near enough, Jimmy removed the wrapping and disclosed the canary, sitting on the topmost perch, his head on one side.

"I bought him because he reminded me of you, dear," Jimmy explained, when the children had quieted sufficiently for him to be heard. "Playing the Glad Game for dear life, the little chap was. Say! Look who's here!"

The closing exclamation was called out by the appearance in the hall of a roly-poly black-and-white kitten. With the unfailing feline instinct for being the center of attention, it took its stand in the middle of the rug, and regarded the group benignly. Jimmy and Pollyanna exchanged meaning glances.

"Great minds run in the same direction," quoted Pollyanna. "The laundress got it for me from a friend of hers. It's smart for six weeks old."

The kitten, as if desirous of demonstrating its precocity, began to wash its face, rubbing its tiny paw behind its ear with a thoroughness to which Pollyanna at once called Junior's attention.

While they were regarding and admiring the interesting animal, the door-bell rang. An expressman handed in a wooden box with slats

nailed across the top, and showed Jimmy where to sign.

"But, what is it?" cried Pollyanna, eyeing the box apprehensively.

"Don't know, but it's for you, whatever it is, —'Mrs. James Pendleton, Elsinore Terrace.'"

"It's something alive," shouted Junior, peering through the slats.

"Oh, goody! something 'live," chanted Judy, again beginning her dervish dance.

The kitten did not share this enthusiasm. It suddenly arched its back and, without warning, its tail became a funeral plume, much to Judy's alarm.

"Muvver, I'm 'fraid our kitty's going to blow up like my balloon did."

Jimmy had gotten rid of the expressman by now, and the next thing was to wrench off one of the slats covering the box. He took one look, then faced Pollyanna, his expression desperate.

"It's a pup, by Jove."

"Jimmy!" gasped Pollyanna.

"And here's a letter addressed to you. It's not any writing I know."

Jimmy tossed the missive to his wife, who ripped it open in frantic haste and looked first at the signature.

" 'Franklin Lindsay,' " she read. "Why—that's the Mr. Lindsay who was here to dinner the other evening."

"Frank Lindsay! For Heaven's sake."

Pollyanna began to read the letter aloud, while the children crowded close for a view of the new arrival, and the kitten continued to spit intermittently, expressing the accumulated venom of countless generations of cats for everything canine.

"My dear Mrs. Pendleton:—

"I was so much interested in the opinion you expressed the other evening, and support your views so heartily, that I'm taking the liberty of sending you a French Bull pup. He's not much to look at as yet, but he ought to make a fine dog. His pedigree will be mailed you shortly. I am sure the children will find him an enjoyable chum, when he is a little older.

"With kindest regards,

"Yours very truly

"Franklin Lindsay."

Jimmy picked up the puppy and held him out for inspection. He was glossy black, with a mirth-provoking face, big ears, enormous eyes, no nose to speak of, and a mouth that curved in a perpetual grin over his projecting lower jaw. Amusement triumphed over Pollyanna's

secret consternation, and she broke into hysterical laughter.

"He looks exactly like Mr. Jiggs."

"You've said it," Jimmy applauded. "That's just the name for him, 'Jiggs.'"

The puppy had discovered the kitten, and expressed his sentiments by a funny, squeaky noise, evidently intended as a bark, and the kitten retaliated by spitting again. Pollyanna bowed her head to her knees in a paroxysm of laughter.

"Such a happy family," she moaned, as she wiped her wet eyes. "The cat will eat the canary, unless it's watched, and the dog will worry the cat, and I'll punish the dog—why, it sounds like the house that Jack built."

Judy evidently had her doubts about the latest addition to the family circle. She came close to her mother, clutching her sleeve.

"I guess I won't get very near him," she whispered. "He might catch my cold."

"Mother," mused Junior, his reflective gaze upon the glossy puppy, "Mother, how many animals does it take to make a m-menagerie?"

CHAPTER IV

EDUCATING THE FAMILY

Of the three additions to the Pendleton menage, only Jiggs proved a problem. The canary, which the children, with characteristic disregard of sex distinctions, had christened Goldilocks, after a favorite heroine, from the start showed himself a model of all the domestic virtues. He splashed about rapturously in his morning bath, ate his day's rations with relish, and the rest of the time expressed his overflowing satisfaction with life by such rippling, melodious trills and runs and quavers, that Pollyanna found it necessary to exercise all her self-control not to stop whatever she was doing and devote herself to listening. When quiet was desired and a bath towel thrown over the cage, Goldilocks took the hint gracefully and, mounting his perch, tucked his head under his wing, and refreshed his ardent little spirit by a good nap. Except for the few minutes devoted to caring for him in the morning, and the necessity of using the carpet sweeper occasionally

during the day, as a result of his vigorous onslaughts on his seed cup, he added practically nothing to the work of the household.

The kitten, too, proved a model. Named Sinbad by Junior, after another favorite in fiction, he was generally addressed as Sin, which Pollyanna considered most unfair, in view of his transcendent virtues. Though but six weeks old when he became a member of the family, he instinctively conformed to the amenities which most animals observe only after long training, if at all.

"Goes to the door and mews, jest as sensible as a person," Nancy told Pollyanna. "An' when he's ready to come in again, he climbs up on the doorstep, an' mews till I open the door. Why, by the time that kitten is growed, he'll have more sense than some whole families, he will, he will."

With Jiggs it was a different story. From none of his ancestors, apparently, had he inherited the slightest bias in favor of any of the standards of civilization. Punished for misdemeanors too shocking to be chronicled, he yelped shrilly, and then, under the pretext that his mistress had merely been playful and carried her fun a trifle too far, he seized her hand and made a pretense of biting it, wagging his

tail frantically all the time. He had an insatiable desire to test his teeth on everything that offered sufficient resistance to make chewing of interest. Books fascinated him, and, like all true bibliophiles, he loved them for themselves as distinguished from their contents. Shoes and slippers presented an irresistible temptation, and Pollyanna's recurrent problem what to give Jimmy for Christmas was unexpectedly solved when she came across one of his last year's slippers reduced to a bare sole. Rubbers left standing in the hall were carried off and hidden behind the cushions of the davenport, or under the bed in the guest room. The children's clothes, hung neatly over a chair at night, had a way of disappearing before it was time to put them on. Even when discovered in these nefarious practices, Jiggs showed no shame; but, on more than one occasion, led Pollyanna a merry chase upstairs and down, with Junior's stocking, or Judy's rompers, flying over his shoulder like a banner.

"Why in the world do you put up with it?" demanded the chorus of neighborhood mothers when, half-vexed and half-laughing, Pollyanna recounted Jiggs' latest offense against propriety.

"I won't have to put up with it for long,"

Pollyanna reminded them. "Puppies soon outgrow the awfully mischievous stage. Of course Jiggs does make an awful lot of work, and he chews up so many things that he's a rather expensive pet, but, at the same time, he's such a darling that, if anything happened to him, Junior and I would be broken-hearted."

"I can't imagine burdening myself with the care of a puppy," said Mrs. Wilkins. "I'm overworked as it is, and my husband often says he can't see how I accomplish what I do."

Pollyanna wondered whether Mr. Wilkins was one of the men who always accept their wife's statements at their face value, or whether the remark quoted merely indicated his fitness for a diplomatic career.

And then a severe young woman by the name of Griggs entered the conversation with an emphatic, "Nothing would induce me to have a dog in the house. My mother knew of a little boy whose nose was bitten off by a pet dog. His whole life was ruined."

She had such an air of having advanced an unanswerable argument that Pollyanna was irresistibly impelled to refute it.

"Once I knew a man who used to beat his wife every Saturday night. But that didn't keep me from getting married."

Mrs. Griggs looked at her blankly.

"Why should it?" she asked.

It was so apparent, not only that she had missed the point, but that no amount of explanation would enlighten her, that Pollyanna resisted the impulse to reply. And that night Mrs. Griggs told her husband that, while their new neighbor, Mrs. Pendleton, seemed a nice little body, she had a way of making the craziest remarks, that really didn't mean a thing.

Pollyanna's opinion, for Jimmy's ear alone, was hardly more complimentary.

"Mrs. Griggs is one of the people without a grain of humor in their composition. I'm afraid I prefer them a little bit wicked."

"Like Jiggs," suggested Jimmy, and with reason, for Jiggs had been exceptionally wicked all day. One of Nancy's dish towels had disappeared, and Nancy had no doubt as to the culprit. The cover of a borrowed book showed an ornamental design which necessitated replacing it before it was returned. And, in his efforts to bury a puppy biscuit in a sofa cushion, Jiggs had scratched through the cover and into the down, so that it took an hour of hard work to eradicate the snowstorm effect in the front hall. Now, tired out after a romp with Junior, he lay curled at the boy's side, his big eyes dreamy and

adoring, and both the boy and the dog seemed to radiate contentment.

Pollyanna regarded the picture complacently. There was no doubt that Junior was mastering the lesson she wished him to learn. Already his dog, so fascinating a compound of vitality and affection, occupied a preposterously large place in his heart. It had startled Pollyanna when Junior first included the name of Jiggs in his evening prayers, mentioning him just after the baby and before Aunt Polly and Nancy. But, even as her lips parted in protest, she had checked herself, wondering whether, perhaps, the child was not right. Surely it was not unfitting that He, whose tender mercies are over all His works, should be petitioned in behalf of a wriggling, satin-backed puppy who, with all his mischief, was embodied love.

It seemed to Pollyanna that she, herself, as well as the children, had learned something from Jiggs.

"I believe everybody who is bringing up a child should bring up a puppy at the same time," she said to Jimmy, "and then, instead of making such a fuss over children's mischief, they'd realize it was just part of the order of things, like gravitation, and the changes of the season."

Jimmy seemed in entire accord with her.

Perhaps that would be true of most people whose interest in the subject was largely academic. But Jimmy's theoretic agreement was soon to be put to a severer test than either of them dreamed.

Promptly at seven o'clock next morning, Pollyanna wakened her husband. She herself had been up for half an hour, and was already dressed.

"Jimmy! Jimmy, wake up! No, don't turn over, because if you do, you'll go to sleep again. And it's time to get up."

"Hm! Oh, all right!" said Jimmy's sleepy voice, and Pollyanna shook him again to be sure he knew what he was saying, and hurried off to the baby, who was lustily demanding her attention. And, a minute or two later, Jimmy effectually banished his drowsiness in the cold tub with which each day's program began.

As he re-crossed the hall, his body tingling after a vigorous rubdown, he found the door of his room had been locked during his absence. It was becoming the practice in the Pendleton household to ascribe all mischief to Jiggs, and he made an admirable scape-goat because he accepted such responsibility so lightheartedly. But it was at once apparent that Jiggs could not have turned the key in the lock, and, if Jiggs

was not responsible, it went without saying that Junior must be.

"Junior," called Jimmy with an impatience excusable in a man who finds himself locked out of his room, attired in a bath robe and slippers, while he has a train to make in a little over an hour. "Junior, unlock that door and be quick about it."

A smothered giggle answered him. The giggle showed intense appreciation of the joke. The effort to smother it indicated a realizing sense of the deficiencies of adult humor. The key rattled in the lock, and Jimmy turned the knob and pushed, but without results.

"Junior," he shouted, his impatience growing, as he began to feel slightly chilly, "stop your fooling and unlock this door instantly. I'm in a hurry."

Again the key rattled and again Jimmy turned the knob and used his strength in futile pushing. Overhearing his uplifted voice, Pollyanna left the baby in Judy's charge, and hurried to her husband's assistance.

"I've noticed that key didn't work quite right," she said. "What ever possessed him to turn it? Wait, Jimmy, we mustn't get him nervous or he'll never unlock the door."

A misleading cheeriness in her voice, Polly-

anna called directions through the keyhole. Apparently Junior did his best to act upon them, but his efforts were unsuccessful, and he grew panicky.

"The little rascal," growled Jimmy. "When I get my hands on him I'll teach him a thing or two."

Pollyanna realized fully that Jimmy was in no mood to be argued with. Probably no man is, till he has got beyond the bath robe and slipper stage of his morning toilet. Yet she could not resist the impulse to remonstrate.

"After all, he didn't mean to be naughty. He only turned the key for a joke. He didn't know he couldn't unlock the door."

"It's time he learned to think about the consequences of what he does," Jimmy declared ferociously. His nerves were on edge. Time was flying. The hour for his train was approaching remorselessly as Fate, and all his clothes were on the other side of a locked door. At the moment Jimmy believed he would thoroughly enjoy putting Junior across his knee and giving him a spanking.

It was about this time that Junior lost his nerve. He began to weep, and tears completed his demoralization. His sobs grew loud as he faced the possibility of spending the rest of his

life shut off from his family. Then Pollyanna had a bright idea.

"We'll have him take out the key and drop it out of the window. Then we can unlock the door from this side. Why didn't we think of it before?"

But either Junior had become quite panic-stricken or else in his frantic efforts to turn the key, he had bent it hopelessly. He found it as impossible to remove it from the lock as he had to turn it. It was in vain that his mother tried to soothe him, in vain that she called the most explicit directions. His crying became more and more violent, until it was impossible for Pollyanna to make herself heard above the uproar.

"He's lost his head completely," she said to Jimmy. "We can't count on him for anything. Now how are you going to get into that room?"

"If I had any clothes I could climb the maple and get into that east window. But I can't go out and climb trees at this hour of the morning, with nothing on but a bath robe."

This did not admit of argument. Pollyanna's brow was corrugated by her effort to solve the problem.

"I suppose an overcoat wouldn't be any better than a bath robe."

"Not a bit," said Jimmy grimly.

"Then I'd better run over to the Hunts, and see if they'll lend me a pair of Mr. Hunt's trousers—I'll ask for old ones."

"You'd have to ask for a pair of suspenders, too," said Jimmy. "Hunt is about twice as big around as I am. His trousers would simply drop off me."

His tone was so disapproving that Pollyanna hesitated.

"Don't you think I'd better go?"

"I can't say the idea appeals to me. If we'd lived here for years, it would be different. But for mere strangers to go around a neighborhood borrowing trousers is about the nerviest proposition I've run up against."

"Junior," screamed Pollyanna through the keyhole, "please stop crying, darling. Daddy will get the door unlocked pretty soon." There was no appreciable diminution of Junior's howls as a result of this daring promise, and Pollyanna turned a distracted face upon her husband. "I can't seem to think while he is crying that way."

"Well, somebody will have to think," declared Jimmy, an irritable tension in his voice. "I've got to get to the office some time today."

"Then I'm going to borrow Mr. Hunt's trousers. I've often loaned Mrs. Hunt things." Pol-

lyanna started down the stairs, but, on the third step, halted and whirled about. "Jimmy, I never thought of it till this minute; but your dress suit is in a trunk in the store-room. Would you rather have those trousers?"

Jimmy sighed gustily.

"I wouldn't choose them for climbing trees. I don't suppose I can afford another dress suit for ten years or so. But I'd rather wear my own trousers, if I ruin them, than a pair belonging to a neighbor I hardly know by sight."

Pollyanna flew to the store-room and, five minutes later, Jimmy was equipped for the climb. He wore a pair of dress trousers, bath slippers, and a spring overcoat buttoned to the chin to conceal his lack of a shirt. Praying inwardly that his neighbors might be too engrossed in preparations for breakfast to notice his unconventional costume, Jimmy made his way to the maple tree at the side of the house. The lowest branches were about eighteen feet above the ground, and he tried to forget his trousers as he put in practise an art of his boyhood and "shinned" up the smooth trunk, until he could grasp the branches overhead and swing himself into the crotch of the tree. Then it was an easy matter to crawl out on a horizontal branch, parallel to the east window of the sleeping room.

Abreast of the window he caught the ledge and drew himself over it.

With a bound he crossed the room. It was no wonder that the key had baffled Junior, for it was so badly bent that it took several minutes to turn it. After opening the door, Jimmy faced about and looked for the culprit.

Junior's howls had ceased as soon as his father's head had appeared above the window ledge. Now he stood beside the bed, his face streaked with tears, his expression showing a conflict of emotions. Blended with his relief at the discovery that he was not to spend the rest of his days in solitary confinement was apprehension as to the immediate future. From his swollen eyes he looked fearfully up at his father.

Jimmy, staring at the diminutive figure, as if Junior had been a strange child, realized poignantly what a little fellow he was. Pollyanna's words, which had irritated him when they were spoken, came back with crushing logic. It was a fact that the most insignificant disobedience, the most trivial display of malice or unkindness, was more culpable than the act which had so annoyed and inconvenienced him. Yet, knowing how often human justice takes into account the consequence instead of the motive, Junior stood shivering, waiting for vengeance to fall.

The little boy caught his breath as he felt a hand on his shoulder. Then all at once he was lifted in his father's arms till their eyes met in a level glance, man to man.

"Listen, old son," said Jimmy. "It's a lot easier to get into scrapes than it is to get out of them. The next time you feel like doing something, ask yourself if you know how to undo it."

How far the lesson sank into Junior's consciousness, Jimmy had no way of knowing. But Junior's relief, in discovering that discipline was to be carried no further than an admonition, was unmistakable. His arms went around his father's neck in a strangling hug. Jimmy could feel the boy's heart pounding an inarticulate thanksgiving against his own. Remembering how he had vowed to teach Junior a lesson when he got his hands on him, Jimmy felt a pang of that wholesome self-contempt which most fathers and mothers need periodically.

There was no time for more. Jimmy set Junior on his feet and dressed in record time. And, though he drank his coffee standing, and ran two blocks in order to catch his train, Jimmy did not feel wholly dissatisfied with the day's beginning. It was something to feel that his own education was progressing along with that of Junior and Jiggs.

CHAPTER V

POLLYANNA TAKES A REST

This particular fall Mr. and Mrs. John Pendleton stayed unusually late at their summer home in Vermont, but they were hardly back in the city before they came out to spend the week-end with Jimmy and Pollyanna. They were delighted to have the young people so near, and, on that account, were in a mood to be pleased with everything. They liked the house and approved the neighborhood. They expressed amazement at the way the children had developed since they saw them last. Even Jiggs called forth the most extravagant admiration.

The only thing in the whole establishment of which Uncle John and Aunt Ruth seemed critical was Pollyanna herself. They both insisted that Pollyanna was tired out, that she was pale and thin, and that she needed a complete rest. Pollyanna explained that moving had been an ordeal but, now that it was over, and everything running smoothly, she was getting more rested every day; her protestations were received with manifest incredulity.

"I understand, Pollyanna," said Aunt Ruth. "You're at your old tricks, but even the Glad Game may be carried too far."

"Aunt Ruth," cried Pollyanna from a full heart, "there's not a bit of credit nowadays in my playing the Game. Everything is so wonderful that I couldn't help being glad if I tried."

Aunt Ruth looked at her fondly, yet with that unmistakable air of superiority which most people are likely to assume toward one who professes superlative satisfaction with life and the world in general.

"It doesn't matter a bit what you say, Pollyanna, because I can see for myself that you're tired out. You need a rest, and you must have a rest at once."

If Aunt Ruth had confined her remarks to Pollyanna, the thing would have gone no farther than a battle of opinions. But, to Pollyanna's dismay, she trained her guns on Jimmy. Whenever the two were alone, she dropped her voice to that undertone which generally means that people are going to say something unpleasant, and reiterated that she was worried about Pollyanna. Couldn't he see for himself that the dear child looked worn? He must not be misled by her tendency to make the best of things. And Jimmy promptly succumbed to the contagion of

his aunt's anxiety, and was ready to exercise marital authority if necessary.

Much to Pollyanna's amazement, they arranged everything without so much as consulting her. Aunt Ruth suggested that one of the maids who had worked for her that memorable winter Pollyanna spent in Boston, and who frequently came to her in an emergency, would be only too glad to assist Nancy for a week in Pollyanna's absence. And it would have been a painful surprise to these two people, who loved Pollyanna so dearly, to know that their calm assumption that she could so easily be spared, and their authoritative settling of the question which concerned her so intimately, had a decidedly depressing effect on her spirits. For the first time in months she found it necessary to concentrate all her resolution on playing the Game.

"I ought to be glad that Jimmy thinks more of what is best for me than of what he wants himself. Of course he'll miss me terribly, even if Aunt Ruth's Mary *is* such a paragon. And it's dear of Aunt Ruth to want me. I wonder if there ever was anybody who had such adorable friends."

And, having reached this climax, Pollyanna winked away a tear, which perhaps went to show

that Aunt Ruth's contention was not altogether mistaken.

The Pendletons went back to Boston Monday and, the following Saturday, the Paragon appeared, that the children might have a chance to get accustomed to her before their mother's departure. To Pollyanna's relief they all accepted her with a matter-of-factness that promised well for the coming week. Jiggs, unfortunately, took one of his unreasoning prejudices against Mary, and barked at her whenever she came near him. And, even while Pollyanna scolded him, she was conscious of an unworthy satisfaction in the reflection that there was one member of the household who would not be satisfied with Mary as a substitute.

On Monday morning Pollyanna went to town with Jimmy. Junior and Judy flattened their noses against the pane as they watched her departure, and Nancy held the baby aloft and waggled her chubby arm in farewell. Pollyanna waved her hand, all smiles, then looked resolutely ahead, and walked at her husband's side in silence.

"Not crying, are you?" Jimmy expostulated. "My dearest girl, do be reasonable."

"Oh, yes, I know, Jimmy," Pollyanna quavered, the tears splashing over her cheeks, even

as she smiled radiantly. "Of course I'm silly, but I'm glad it hurts to leave them even for a week. Think how heavenly it will seem to be back home again."

The car and Uncle John awaited her at the station in Boston, and she was whirled away after a goodbye to Jimmy which to the cynical might have seemed sufficient preparation for a year's absence. But, after blowing her nose repeatedly, and making somewhat irrelevant replies to Uncle John's kind inquiries as to the children's health, Pollyanna characteristically began to enjoy her surroundings. The luxurious car, with the big yellow chrysanthemum in the flower holder, was a delight. The sights of the city, which had been her home for eight months, thrilled her pleasantly. And when, at length, the car halted before the very house where the former Mrs. Carew had so reluctantly received her, Pollyanna flew up the steps with almost the exuberance of her old-time childish self.

On this occasion Aunt Ruth welcomed her tenderly.

"I'm so glad to have you here, you dear child. A week of rest will do you a world of good. In fact you look better already."

Pollyanna evaded the unwelcome topic.

"How beautiful your home is! It's so long

since I was here that I'll have to get used to it all over again."

Aunt Ruth answered with an abstracted smile which told that her thoughts were busy.

"Couldn't you eat something, Pollyanna? You made such an early start."

"No, indeed, I couldn't possibly eat anything before luncheon."

"Then you'd better take things quietly till half past ten. Then Mark is going to drive us down to my club. We have a lecture on current events every Monday morning. You'd enjoy that, wouldn't you, dear?"

"Oh, awfully, Aunt Ruth." Pollyanna spoke with real enthusiasm. She was well aware that she was quite out of touch with world affairs, in her absorption in a different sort of current events, the baby's last tooth, a rash on Judy's chest, Jiggs' latest iniquity. "I shall just love to hear the lecture," she declared.

"From the club we'll go to one of the hotels for luncheon. I'm a member of the organization that aids worthy mothers, left with families to support. Once a month we have a luncheon, and hear the reports of our workers while we are eating. It saves time, you see."

"Yes, I see," nodded Pollyanna. She could not help thinking that, if the workers brought in

harrowing reports regarding poverty-stricken families, it might take the edge off one's appetite. "It'll be very interesting," she said quickly, as if apologizing for her unspoken thought.

"It only takes an hour. We'll have a nice time to rest before Mrs. Ingraham's tea this afternoon. A Canadian poetess is going to read us some of her poems, and there'll be a very cultured, delightful group of women present. You always meet such worth-while people at Mrs. Ingraham's."

Pollyanna, who was wondering a little uneasily if the wardrobe she had brought would meet the requirements of Mrs. Ingraham's tea, heaved a sigh of relief. It was unlikely that worth-while women, who were interested in poetry, would be too critical of one's clothes.

The program of the day was carried out as Aunt Ruth had outlined it. Pollyanna enjoyed the lecture on current events, which dealt very largely with affairs in Europe. It was a relief to turn her thoughts from Jiggs to the Balkan States. She found the luncheon interesting, though, in her absorption with the reports given by the various workers, she might as well have eaten chipped beef as chicken cutlet. They did not get away very early, for several ladies wished to consult Aunt Ruth regarding the work of the

organization, and Pollyanna listened absorbedly to their discussion.

It was half past two when they reached home and the maid, who helped them off with their wraps, informed them that Mr. Pendleton had telephoned that he had secured tickets for the play. Aunt Ruth beamed.

"I didn't speak of it because I was afraid of disappointing you, dear. We couldn't get tickets Saturday, but the man we deal with was hopeful of securing them from somebody. This play, 'Ebb Tide,' is one of the best attractions of the season."

"Lovely, Aunt Ruth. I feel as if I were living in a delirious whirl."

"We'll have to leave about half past three," said Aunt Ruth, consulting her clock. "The poetess will read soon after four, and tea will be served when she finishes. I'm afraid you won't have time to lie down, Pollyanna."

"Of course not," Pollyanna agreed. "And what's more, I don't need to. I'm not a bit tired."

As a matter of fact she had barely time to telephone Jimmy after she had dressed for the tea.

"Just wanted to give you my love and tell you that I'm flying from one gaiety to another 'til I remind myself of Sin chasing his tail."

"Good work," approved Jimmy. "Keep it up!"

"Call me the first thing in the morning, Jimmy. I shall want to know how the baby got along. It's the first night she ever—"

"Oh, she'll be all right," interposed Jimmy hastily. "Now have a good time and don't worry."

Aunt Ruth called from the hall below, and there was no time for more. Pollyanna went off to Mrs. Ingraham's, where she enjoyed the Canadian poetess and met so many of Aunt Ruth's worth-while friends that their names and faces all ran into one another like a cross-word puzzle. She sat down to dinner, the edge of her appetite dulled by Mrs. Ingraham's tea and cakes, and they were hardly up from the table before it was necessary to hurry into her only evening frock, and start for the theatre. She enjoyed the play, though toward the end she grew so sleepy that she had to blink hard to keep her eyes open. They stopped at one of the hotels for a quite unnecessary late supper, and, when Pollyanna laid her head upon her pillow shortly after one o'clock, she was too tired even to wonder if the baby were missing or needing her.

Pollyanna had innocently assumed that this was an exceptional day, but she soon realized that it was typical of Aunt Ruth's round. The

second day was like it, except that instead of a lecture on current events, they heard an entertaining talk on the latest books. They had luncheon with one of Aunt Ruth's friends, the luncheon followed by a lecture recital on Scandinavian folk songs, by an attractive young woman in native costume. Late in the afternoon they stopped at the Art Club, where a reception was in progress for a visiting celebrity, and reached home just in time to dress for dinner, a more formal occasion than usual, as there were several guests. That night when Pollyanna retired she found herself too weary to go to sleep for some time.

She realized with amazement the endurance of women of Aunt Ruth's type. They were interested in all cultural movements, all philanthropic enterprises. Pollyanna seemed to herself a person of leisure, compared with these women who lived with one eye on the clock, and went remorselessly from one activity to another through the long day. She wondered what sort of brains they had, that they could keep all the information they collected in a day, properly labelled and pigeon-holed. She suspected that already she was getting things muddled.

But worse was coming. At breakfast, the morning of the third day, Aunt Ruth said cas-

ually, "By the way, Pollyanna, how's your bridge?"

Pollyanna stared.

"Aren't you thinking of Jimmy, Aunt Ruth?"

"Auction bridge, dear child. What sort of game do you play?"

Pollyanna laughed light-heartedly.

"Probably the lowest form known to science."

If she had imagined that this was a fit theme for jesting, she was immediately undeceived. Both Aunt Ruth and Uncle John looked as serious as if she had acknowledged herself unable to read and write.

"We'll have to find time to drill you a little today," said Aunt Ruth. "Tomorrow you're invited to two card parties."

"Two card parties!" repeated Pollyanna, and a quick ear would have detected consternation in her tone.

"We're asked to a luncheon and bridge at Mrs. Cunningham's tomorrow, and in the evening our bridge club meets. One of the members happens to be away, so you can take her place."

Pollyanna realized she was expected to be pleased and flattered by the opportunity. She said faintly, "But Aunt Ruth, wouldn't it be better to invite somebody who knows more about it?"

Aunt Ruth did not seem to think so.

"You can never learn younger," she remarked reasonably. You're bright enough, so that if you keep your mind on the game, with the help we'll give you, you ought to do very well."

It was not easy to decide on a time that could be devoted to advancing this branch of Pollyanna's education. It was at once evident that something must be given up. After a protracted discussion, it was decided to forego the pleasure of the private view of an art exhibition they had planned to attend that evening. Pollyanna was secretly pleased at the decision. The idea of a quiet evening at home appealed to her strongly. She telephoned Jimmy, shortly before train-time, that she was going to have an evening off.

Pollyanna's idea of a game of cards was painfully old-fashioned. She thought of it as sheer recreation, something that passed the time pleasantly, without the fatigue incident to work. That evening, when Aunt Ruth and Uncle John attempted to improve her game of bridge, was enlightening in more ways than one. Pollyanna attempted to enliven the evening by sprightly monologues between hands. She had told several of the children's funny sayings, when Aunt Ruth checked her gently.

"If I were you, dear, I'd try to keep my mind

on the game. If you distract your thoughts, you can't possibly do yourself justice."

The sobered Pollyanna gave her attention to her hand, and began to realize that the evening was very different from what she had anticipated. They were playing, not for fun it appeared, but with deadly seriousness. Pollyanna led her cards with an awesome sense of the importance of each play.

But, even after reaching this realization, she did not give satisfaction.

"Oh, Pollyanna," Aunt Ruth remonstrated in a pained voice. "That's not the right lead. You see, Uncle John has the queen."

"Oh, has he, Aunt Ruth? But I didn't know that!"

"You might have known it, dearie, if you had watched the way the cards fell." And Aunt Ruth proceeded to explain why Pollyanna should have realized that the queen of hearts was in John Pendleton's hand, and Pollyanna listened with a growing realization of her intellectual limitations. The effect upon her mind was exactly as if Aunt Ruth had been repeating words which were perfectly understandable taken singly, but meant nothing taken in combination. When she went to bed she was aware that she

did not look forward to the card parties next day with cheerful anticipation.

The afternoon card party was a big affair. Pollyanna was immediately separated from Aunt Ruth, and placed at a table with three strangers, all young women like herself. She was pleasantly impressed with all three, and would have enjoyed herself, had she not been fearful of forfeiting their respect by her amateurish playing. But, with the freakishness which has made beginner's luck proverbial, fate gave her cards which could not be beaten. Pollyanna and her partner left the table winners, and with an imposing score.

But now Pollyanna's luck deserted her. The two women who awaited them at the next table probably could not have been matched in the entire assembly for cheap vulgarity. With both of them cards were not merely a diversion, not merely a profound interest in life, but a passion. They played early and late and seven days a week. They went to the seashore in the spring and the mountains in the summer, not to see the sea nor the mountains, but to play cards with new partners. They had no time for reading, and the southern mountain women, in their lonely shacks, knew as much as they of what was

going on in the world. Art, philosophy, and religion together meant less to them than winning a rubber. Though one was unpleasantly fat, with a whole tier of double chins running down into her ample bosom, and the other was thin to the point of emaciation, there was a queer resemblance between them.

In the interval before the signal to play, Pollyanna was astonished to find that the two ladies were discussing the value of the prizes generally given by the hostess of the afternoon, with the implication that they were too inexpensive to be a credit to the giver. A hostess at whose home they had played the previous day had set a more admirable example in this respect, but the afternoon had been far from satisfactory, for they openly accused the winner of the prize of cheating. Pollyanna, listening, blushed to her ears in vicarious humiliation.

It was the emaciated woman who became her partner, and she had a way of taking deep breaths, each time Pollyanna led, which would have been disconcerting to a player of wide experience.

At the end of the first hand, she burst out explosively, "Would you mind telling me—I'm just curious, you understand—why you signaled clubs when you couldn't take a trick?"

Pollyanna stared at her aghast.

"Did I signal? I didn't mean to."

"Then why did you play your seven spot before the six?"

Pollyanna did not even remember that she had done so, but, in case the emaciated woman was right, the reason seemed simple enough.

"I suppose," she hesitated, "I thought it wouldn't make any difference which was played first."

Her partner said nothing; but her sigh spoke for her. It said plainly, "Heaven grant me patience," and again Pollyanna blushed, less for her own bad playing than for her partner's bad manners.

It was clearly time for the Glad Game. "Anyway," said Pollyanna to herself, "I can be glad I don't have to do this often."

The thought helped her through another hand. A little bell tinkled, and Pollyanna and her partner were found to be the losers. The others moved away, and the emaciated lady greeted her new partner with joy. In this round, too, Pollyanna was defeated, but it was even better than victory to see the emaciated lady moving off to the next table. Pollyanna hoped with all her heart that she might not see her again, and her wish was granted. Nor did she again encounter

a player who even remotely suggested the mercenary vulgarity of that appalling pair who had made a game of cards an incredible ordeal, but the afternoon was almost over before she succeeded in freeing herself from the spell of discomfort they had put upon her.

The evening was distinctly pleasanter than the afternoon. The company was smaller and more select, and all present were very anxious to be kind to the young woman who called Mrs. Pendleton, "Aunt Ruth." But at the same time, in the hush that descended when the cards were dealt, there was a suggestion of serious purpose which was far from Pollyanna's idea of a pleasant social evening. She did her level best, that she might not make these kind people uncomfortable, and shame Aunt Ruth before them all, but she was too tired to make the most even of her scant knowledge, and she suspected that some of her partners, as well as she herself, were thankful when it came time to go out to the dining room.

How great the strain had been she did not know until she was in bed, and had closed her eyes with the fond expectation of going to sleep immediately. And at once there flashed before her the ten of hearts, as distinct as if she had just played it. And then she saw that every red

heart was a little impish face. They grinned at her, they rolled their eyes. Some even stuck out their tongues, and, when she turned over, hoping for escape, the ten of hearts became the deuce of spades, and funny little black faces winked and blinked at her. It was almost morning before her weariness got the better of her nerves, and she dropped off to sleep.

Pollyanna did not play cards again during her stay, though once or twice Aunt Ruth suggested it. Instead, they filled in the time with lectures, and the symphony concert, and shopping, and luncheons with Uncle John at his club, and attending a pageant given for the benefit of the Near East relief. On Sunday Jimmy came for dinner and, along in the afternoon, took Pollyanna home with him.

The home-coming was all she had hoped. The older children shrieked ecstatically at the sight of her and clung to her as if they were determined she should not again escape them. The baby cooed and gurgled; Jiggs barked himself hoarse, and then, snatching up the glove Pollyanna had dropped when she took the baby on her lap, retired under the davenport to chew it into a hopeless pulp; Sin rubbed against her dress and purred; and Goldilocks' song of welcome rose loudly above the clatter.

"I really believe you look better," Jimmy said, eyeing her critically. "You did have a good rest, didn't you?"

Pollyanna's hesitation dissolved in laughter.

"Let me tell you something, Jimmy. The over-worked mother, who gets so much sympathy, doesn't work as hard as women like Aunt Ruth, who belong to a dozen clubs and societies, and read everything worth reading and see everything worth seeing as a matter of course. But they say a change of work is rest, don't they, and, if that's the case, I've had a restful week."

CHAPTER VI

POLLYANNA ENTERTAINS

Pollyanna had made up her mind to celebrate her return home by a children's party. The parties of the Pendleton children were never formidable affairs. No attempt was made to ape the procedure of grown-ups, with invitations and decorations and an elaborate menu. Junior and Judy asked their friends to come to their party without ceremony, and there were always sandwiches and cookies for a few extra guests. On especial occasions there was vanilla ice-cream and sponge cake. Pollyanna joined in the merry-making, not with the patronizing condescension of most adults who play games with children, but with a zest that made her suspect at least a partial truth in Jimmy's oft-repeated accusation that she had really never grown up.

When she consulted Mrs. McGill regarding the local confectioners, her neighbor showed the greatest interest in her plan, and ended by inviting herself to be present.

"I'm a wonderfully useful person on such oc-

casions. And there's always some child who needs to have its nose wiped. Do let me come."

"I'd love to have you," Pollyanna beamed. "And I may need help more than I usually do, for the party is going to be a little larger than I intended. Both Junior and Judy added several names to my list. Judy is very anxious to invite Inez Richards. She says she's a poor little girl whose mother has to work. I was surprised because—"

Pollyanna's explanation was checked by the discovery that Mrs. McGill was holding tightly to the clothes reel, in a paroxysm of soundless laughter. Such mirth is as contagious as yawning, and Pollyanna laughed from sympathy, without having the least idea what was so amusing.

"What *are* you laughing about?" she demanded when Mrs. McGill reached the point of moaning softly and wiping her eyes. "I can't see that the poverty of one's neighbors is an occasion for merriment."

"Oh, if Mildred Richards could only have heard you," murmured Mrs. McGill in an exhausted voice. "And if I could have been present to see her face. To think of Judy's pitying Inez because her mother is poor. It isn't poverty that sends Mildred into the marts of trade, my child. It's the necessity for self-expression.'

Pollyanna only stared.

"I suppose I'm dull, but I don't understand."

"Domestic drudgery," explained Mrs. McGill, with an air of quoting, "rots the very soul. A mother's first duty is growth."

"What sort of work does she do in the city?"

"I believe she's one of the partners in a little gift-shop on Newbury street."

"I can't see why that work is so much more conducive to growth than looking after one's own child."

"I suspect you're old fashioned, my dear. If you were a real modern product it would be perfectly evident. And then, while Jim Richards is doing awfully well for a young fellow, I don't believe he could buy his wife a thousand dollar fur coat like the one she got last winter." Unexpectly she laughed again. "I love it when you curl your lip in that scornful fashion. The only fear I've ever had about you was that you might be just a bit too sweet, and now that doubt is set at rest forever."

Immediately after that conversation, Pollyanna gave Judy permission to invite Inez to the party. If the mother was not a poor woman, Pollyanna was inclined to think Inez an unfortunate child, deserving of the help and sympathy of the charitably inclined. Most of the

children, when they were invited, said they would ask their mothers; Inez accepted without any such stipulation.

The party was set for Saturday and the hour was three, but a little before two the bell rang. Nancy hurried to answer it, putting on her clean apron as she went, and a moment later she called up the stairs informally, "It's a little girl, Miss Pollyanna. She says she's come to the party."

Judy, whose curly head was being reduced to order, slipped from her mother's detaining hand, and rushed into the hall to reconnoitre through the bannisters.

"It's Inez Richards," she announced joyfully. "Hello, Inez!"

"Hello," said a piping voice belowstairs, and Pollyanna, coming to reclaim her daughter, caught sight of a diminutive figure sitting very stiffly on the edge of a chair so tall that her feet dangled uncomfortably some distance from the floor.

Pollyanna was not surprised that Inez had arrived more than an hour ahead of time. Her mother was in the city, seeking expression for her personality in selling place cards and bead bags, and the servant she had left in charge of Inez was doubtless glad to be rid of her responsibility as early as possible.

"Take off her things, Nancy," Pollyanna directed, "and give her a smaller chair where she'll be more comfortable." She addressed her guest directly. "Judy isn't ready yet, dear. She'll be down as soon as she is dressed."

There are few tardy guests at a children's party. By three o'clock every child was present, and Jiggs, who had gradually been growing more and more obstreperous, reached a state of excitement little short of frenzy. There was nothing of the misanthrope about Jiggs. He was too young to have developed that rather uncanny faculty for judging character which generally characterizes an older dog, and he loved all humankind from his master and mistress, down through the postman and the ice-man, to the shabbiest tramp who knocked at the back door and whined a request for something to eat. But, even more than men and women, Jiggs adored children. The three Pendleton youngsters were the divinities on whom the adoration of his puppy heart lavished itself without stint. And, as the house gradually filled with minor deities in the shape of grinning small boys and preternaturally dignified little girls, Jiggs' ecstasy reached the point of delirum. He raced about the rooms barking incessantly, snatching at the handkerchiefs held loosely in small hands,

or at the dangling ends of neckties, till a succession of shrieks marked his destructive course. Pollyanna captured him after a chase—he was too excited to pay the slightest attention to the word of command—and carried him struggling into the kitchen.

"Nancy, take Jiggs and shut him in the cellar. He's disgracing the family by his behavior."

Jiggs howled dismally as he was handed into Nancy's keeping, understanding perfectly that this meant banishment from the Eden whose privileges he had abused almost as if he had been human. Pollyanna hurried back to the party, fearing that the lamentable sounds for which Jiggs was responsible had cast a shadow over the festivities. As it proved, she might have spared her fears, for already the racket in the living-room drowned out Jiggs' melancholy solo.

Pollyanna started the games without waiting for Mrs. McGill's arrival. There were nine small boys standing around awkwardly, grinning impishly at one another, and alert for any chance for mischief. Her only safety, as Pollyanna knew from previous experience, was to get ahead of them in starting something, to give them plenty to do every minute, and change often enough to hold their interest and attention. The

ten little girls were, for the most part, imbued with the conventional ideas of decorum, so that they were more tractable guests, but here and there, even in their ranks, was one so radiantly mischievous that Pollyanna realized it would be the part of wisdom never to turn her back upon her.

When Mrs. McGill was admitted, she made a pretense of clapping her hands over her ears, then seized Pollyanna by the arm and pulled her into the dining room where she could make herself heard by raising her voice.

"Extraordinary woman! All this din under your roof, and yet you show no signs of going crazy."

"It wouldn't do for a daily diet," Pollyanna admitted, "but once in a while I rather like it. I think I must lack what the average woman calls nerves. Oh, Jack Horner, you mustn't!"

She dived into the hall, where Jack Horner had seized Genevieve Wilkins by two long curls and was pretending to drive her, outraging Genevieve's sensibilities by shouting, "Gidap!" Genevieve was one of the children whose tears are always on tap, and, before Pollyanna could check her tormentor, she was crying bitterly. Pollyanna led Jack Horner away, and Mrs. McGill devoted herself to soothing the temperamental

Genevieve, while the gaiety of the party continued unabated.

It was getting near time for refreshments and Pollyanna, a trifle warm and disheveled, was reaching the point where the noise made by her own three children seemed quite sufficient, when the door bell rang. As Nancy was occupied, Pollyanna went to answer the summons with a hazy expectation of encountering the postman or an old-clothes man. Then at once the vagueness of her mood sharpened into alert astonishment. With a surprised exclamation she stepped out upon the porch, closing the door behind her.

On the porch stood a small boy, carrying in his arms a small dog, and, at the sight of Pollyanna, the dog's stubby tail began to wag briskly, while his big mouth stretched in a canine grin. Over the dog's head a pair of big black eyes stared up at Pollyanna. It was Philip.

"He got lost," the boy announced.

"Jiggs! Bad dog! Where did you find him?"

Jiggs did not belong to the sensitive type of dog that is crushed when rebuked. His crooked tail vibrated like a pendulum gone mad. He barked in a peremptory fashion, and interpreted his orders by struggling to free himself from

Philip's detaining clasp. Pollyanna added her voice to his.

Philip loosened his hold and Jiggs celebrated his freedom by leaping on his mistress and pawing her with his big puppy feet, to the imminent peril of her little silk frock. Pollyanna slapped him with about as much effect as if she had been slapping a cyclone and repeated her inquiry, "Where did you find him?"

"Oh, down there."

Philip's forefinger described a circle and ended by pointing to the extreme tip of the spire of the Episcopal church. Pollyanna could not decide whether Jiggs, escaped from durance vile, was keeping to his own premises, or had run away, when Philip spied him and resolved to use him as a card of admission to gaieties from which he was barred.

As she had no way of settling that question, Pollyanna decided that it was best to err on the side of gratitude.

"Let's go around to the back door, Philip. How would you like some ice cream, and a cooky with pink frosting?"

It was plain that Philip had a soul above material things. It was companionship he craved, not ice cream. As he followed at Pollyanna's

heels, he gave his attention to the cheery sounds within the house.

"There's lots of little boys and girls in there," he said.

"Yes. They make a lot of noise, don't they?"

Pollyanna found it hard to speak lightly, so strongly did her sympathies go out to the little outcast trotting behind her.

"That's 'cause they're playin' games. I know a nice game," hinted Philip. "Onct I showed a little boy how to play it and he said it was the nicest game that he ever played in his whole life."

"Oh, dear," thought Pollyanna. "Jimmy Pendleton certainly has the easy end, when he decides that Philip must be kept away from our children, and then leaves me to do it. I'd like to see how he would act in this case."

The entry of Pollyanna and her two escorts into the kitchen, by the back door, took Nancy so by surprise that she dropped a saucepan and cried, "Glory be to praise," as fervently as if she had been attending prayer meeting. Then she gazed at the four-footed arrival, and her eyes fairly bulged.

"Good gracious, Miss Pollyanna, where did you pick up another dog that looks enough like Jiggs to be his twin brother?"

"It *is* Jiggs, Nancy. How did he get out of the cellar?"

"He ain't out of the cellar, Miss Pollyanna. He can't be, fer I haven't had that door open and there ain't a crack anywheres big enough for a mouse to squeeze through, let alone a dog."

But the cellar proved to have no occupant and, having satisfied herself on this score, Nancy remembered that, while the party was in progress, the man had called to read the gas meter.

"Jiggs must have slipped out without my seein' him," cried Nancy, shocked at such perfidy. "My, who'd believe he could be that sly, and him with a face as innercent as a week old baby's."

As Nancy searched the cellar for Jiggs, Pollyanna was opening the ice cream prematurely, and Philip had a heaping dish and a cooky in the shape of a heart, magnificent in pink frosting. But he ate with the air of one whose mind is on other things, and Pollyanna's sympathy detained her so long that, when she rejoined Mrs. McGill, that good lady was in a state bordering on collapse.

"Oh, my dear, where have you been? The boys started shoving and they broke that vase on the little mahogany stand. And Genevieve cried again, because somebody stepped on her toes."

Pollyanna was unruffled.

"Genevieve generally cries at least three times when she plays with my children for an afternoon. Today it's only been twice, and that's almost a record. And the vase only cost twenty-five cents. I put the nice things away before the party started."

She clapped her hands to gain the children's attention.

"Listen, boys and girls. We're going to march into the dining room very, very quietly, without any pushing or crowding, and sit down in the chairs up against the wall and wait to see what will happen."

The party laughed in chorus at Pollyanna's joke and laughed again when Judy shrieked, "I know what'll happen—ice cream." And, if the passage into the dining room lacked military precision, the scramble was good-natured, and even Genevieve found no occasion for tears.

That night, after the children were in bed and asleep, Jimmy pretended to discover on the society page of the Boston evening paper an item relating to the day's festivities.

"Listen to this," he exclaimed. "'This afternoon, about twenty of the younger set enjoyed the hospitality of Mrs. James Pendleton, one of the most charming hostesses of the exclusive

suburb where she has resided since September. Mrs. Pendleton's daughter, known to her intimates as Judy, and her son, Junior, aided their mother in receiving. Those present reported a whale of a time.' "

"They did enjoy themselves," Pollyanna answered complacently. "It was such fun, Jimmy. I wish you might have gotten out early enough to see them."

And, well as Jimmy knew her, he did not detect a certain reservation in her enthusiasm. With all her faculty for gladness, Pollyanna could not forget the yearning look in Mrs. McGill's eyes as she helped the children on with their wraps. And even more haunting was the memory of Philip, his stomach full of ice cream, and his child's heart hungry.

CHAPTER VII

A CONTROVERSIAL EVENING

It goes without saying that Pollyanna's children had been reared on the Glad Game. As soon as they were old enough to understand, they had been told the story of the little crutches in the missionary barrel and the Game that had started then and there. And they accepted their mother's teaching readily, for it is only to those who have left the heavenly intuitions of childhood far behind that pessimistic gloom seems the way of wisdom.

When the snow, which had carpeted the earth whitely at bedtime, disappeared during the night, due to a rise of temperature followed by a drizzling rain, and Junior, who had brought up his sled from the cellar to be in readiness for the morning, wept at the sight of the bare earth, Judy comforted him by suggesting, "Anyway, Junior, you can be glad about Aunt Sadie's sending you the Indian clothes, 'cause now you can scalp me 'n' Jiggs 'n' the baby," a prospect so alluring that Junior smiled through his tears.

And it was Junior who essayed the rôle of consoler when Inez Richards lamented conditions due to her mother's absence from home.

"If my mamma didn't have to go off 'n' work, she'd let me have bread 'n' jelly when I got hungry. But Mary says she won't have chillen messin' 'round."

Junior nodded wisely.

"Well, anyway, Inez, if your mother stayed to home she wouldn't let you come over to our house so much, so you can be glad about that."

Pollyanna, overhearing, smiled. It was true that, if Mrs. Richards had known how her daughter spent her time, from the close of the kindergarten she and Junior both attended until six o'clock, she would have realized that the thing had become an imposition. Pollyanna wondered if all mothers, whose yearning for self-expression drove them to assume outside duties, simply handed their original responsibilities over to some outsider who had no obligation in the case.

Inez' society, for from four to six hours a day, was not an unalloyed pleasure, especially as, in her mother's absence from home, the child was running wild. The maid Mrs. Richards left in charge, and of whose competence she boasted, was a martinet where cleanliness and order were concerned; and she looked on children with un-

concealed disapproval, as the embodiment of forces hostile to her twin divinities. Mary's ideal was a house that never got out of order and, in her effort to make the dream come true, she kept Inez out of the house as much as possible.

Pollyanna heard Inez asking Junior one afternoon, "Is Nancy your aunt or your grandmother?"

Junior pondered.

"She ain't nothin'" he burst out at length, "'cept just Nancy."

"She's not the hired girl, is she?"

"I—I guess so."

"Well, she isn't. Hired girls hate children. I guess she's a kind of grandmother, and she lets you call her Nancy so folks won't think she's old."

While Pollyanna would have been just as well satisfied without Inez' daily visits, she could not find it in her heart to turn the lonely child away. And, since Inez was so constantly in the company of Junior and Judy, it seemed necessary to subject her to the same discipline that she did her own children, insisting on courtesy and good humor toward one another, and on prompt obedience to Nancy as well as to herself. After she had sent Inez home on several occasions for being quarrelsome, or answering Nancy rudely,

the small girl became, if not altogether a model, at least an extremely cautious wrongdoer.

"I'm sure Inez makes me quite as much trouble as Junior," Pollyanna told Jimmy. "As far as discipline goes, I might as well have four children as three."

"Well, anyway, we don't have to buy her shoes," said Jimmy, who had just paid a bill for outfitting the family. "And that's something to be thankful for."

It was not until the evening Mrs. Richards called, apologizing for the absence of her husband who had planned to accompany her and then had been detained in the city by business, that Pollyanna realized how strong a prejudice she had formed against the mother of Inez. Meeting her face to face, she found herself disarmed by something appealing in Mrs. Richards' personality. She was a tall, thin young woman with the hot eyes of a zealot. So entirely did she regard herself as the prophetess of a new dispensation, that, after a few minutes of preliminary commonplaces, her conversation became sheer propaganda.

"Oh, of course it's hard for me, Mrs. Pendleton, this going into the city each day. And it makes it harder, because my husband is not in sympathy with it. He is doing very well in busi-

ness, and he can't understand that the money I earn is a minor consideration with me. It's the principle that's important."

Pollyanna hesitated. She did not wish to become involved in a debate on the occasion of her first meeting with Mrs. Richards, and yet she could not think of any rejoinder which would not seem argumentative. She had forgotten that the enthusiast can carry on a conversation with no assistance beyond an occasional grunt and a more or less intelligent stare. While she sought for a suitable reply, Mrs. Richards was continuing, without seeming to realize her failure to respond.

"Oh, Mrs. Pendleton, I have at heart the interests of multitudes of women toiling in the tread-mill of domestic drudgery. In Russia we've seen the result of a reaction against tyranny and, when women revolt, the outcome will be vastly more terrible."

Pollyanna saw a chance to interject a question.

"But there's drudgery in every kind of work, isn't there; in business just as much as in keeping house?"

"I beg your pardon?"

It was clear that Pollyanna's question had interrupted the other's train of thought, that Mrs. Richards was more interested in the expression

of her own theories, than in hearing the ideas of her hostess. Pollyanna repeated the question, adding a word of explanation.

"Take your own business, for instance. You have a gift shop, haven't you? Of course, when the things come, they have to be unpacked and put on the shelves or in the show cases, and the price marked on each one. And then, when customers drop in, you show them lots of things they don't want, even if you're finally lucky enough to come across something they do want. And then there's sending out bills and paying bills, and seeing that the janitor does his work properly and a thousand things you know a great deal more about than I do. It seems to me all this is drudgery, just as much as anything we house-keepers have to do."

"But, of course, you'll admit," said Mrs. Richards, deepening her voice impressively, "that woman is broadened by contact with the outer world."

The thing was becoming a debate in spite of her. Pollyanna sighed, but stood her ground.

"I can't see why selling a woman a string of beads is any more broadening than buying a chicken from a butcher."

Mrs. Richards disregarded the point.

"Mrs. Pendleton," she said intensely, "for gen-

erations men have been striving to keep women in an inferior place. It's sickening to think of the brilliant personalities that have worn themselves out sweeping and dusting and preparing three meals a day. Talk of waste! The most fearful waste of all time is the squandering of the abilities of women on what has so long been called women's work."

"But we mustn't forget," Pollyanna reminded her, gently, "that we've been trusted with the most important job of all."

"I suppose you mean making men comfortable. They like women to believe that's the most important work in the world."

"No, I don't mean that at all. I mean raising the children. Building a sky-scraper isn't nearly as important a thing, is it, as bringing a boy up to a splendid manhood?"

There was an irritating suggestion of superiority in Mrs. Richards' smile.

"But, my dear Mrs. Pendleton, surely you admit that the mother's position in the home is no longer as important as it was. The old-time woman wove the material out of which she made her children's clothes, and carded the wool out of which she knitted their stockings. She not only nursed them when they were sick, but grew and dried the herbs which she used as remedies.

Now, most of these things are done for her, and by people better qualified than herself. Even the bedtime story comes over the radio, nowadays. The mother is by no means the indispensable person she used to be."

"If she isn't," Pollyanna retorted, an edge to her voice, "I'm glad my children haven't found it out."

She was sorry, the moment the words had passed her lips, fearing that Mrs. Richards would take the remark as personal; but, at that moment, Junior effected a diversion by calling over the bannisters, "Mother, hasn't my Daddy come yet?"

"No, Junior; run back to bed and go to sleep."

"But I can't go to sleep th'out kissin' Daddy."

"I'll tell him to go up to your room and kiss you when he comes in. And, if you're sound asleep, he'll kiss you twice."

"Cross your heart?" stipulated Junior, not, Pollyanna was sure, to cast any doubt on her veracity, but to impress her with the importance of her promise.

"Cross my heart," Pollyanna agreed and smiled at her caller. And then she realized that Mrs. Richards was looking at her with an air of curious fascination, as if she were examining an animal of unfamiliar species. It seemed a good

time to turn the conversation to less controversial topics and for some minutes they talked of their children as any two mothers might have done. Pollyanna was rather amused by Mrs. Richards' failure to thank her for acting the part of foster-mother to Inez six days out of every week. This was not, she realized, because Mrs. Richards was ungrateful, but because she had no idea how Inez spent her afternoons. Pollyanna had fully expected to dislike Mrs. Richards, but instead she found the ardent, thin young woman oddly attractive. She felt sorry for her and she suspected that Mrs. Richards was pitying her, as an extremely unprogressive representative of her sex,—in short, a back number.

They shook hands warmly when they parted.

"I hope you'll join our woman's club, Mrs. Pendleton," said Mrs. Richards. "Anyone tied down, as the mother of three little children must be, deserves a good time occasionally."

Pollyanna thanked her.

"I'm sure I'd enjoy the club and I think it's a good thing for us all to have a change rather often. But please don't think I'm tied down, for I'm doing all the things I'd rather do. I'm sure nobody in the world has a better time than I do."

"Of course it's pleasant to feel you're doing your duty."

"Oh, no!" Pollyanna burst out. "Oh, it's not that at all." She hurried on impetuously, trying to make the matter clear. "I couldn't possibly be as happy anywhere else as I am with my children. They're so wonderful—little children are, and so dear. It's such a beautiful thing to see them growing and developing and learning to be generous and helpful and to love the truth. And, even when they're naughty, they're terribly interesting, and funny, too. Sometimes it seems as if I'd die if I couldn't get off in a corner and laugh."

Mrs. Richards looked at her, frankly bewildered.

"Well," she said after a moment, "there's no doubt that you're the sort of woman to bring up children." And her face wore a thoughtful expression as she went down the steps, as if she were wondering whether she could possibly speak as enthusiastically of the gift shop as Pollyanna had spoken of her job.

When Jimmy came, Pollyanna told him of the promise she had made Junior and followed him into the children's room to watch him stoop and kiss first one tanned cheek and then the other.

Junior, roused, looked up adoringly into his father's face, and then, discovering his mother in the room, sat up like a Jack-in-the-box.

"Mother," he exclaimed, his alert little brain instantly in action, "Mother, don't you feel sorry for poor God?"

Pollyanna jumped.

"Why, Junior, what do you mean?"

"Well, you see He has to be everybody's Daddy and He hasn't any daddy at all. And He hasn't any mother, either. Shouldn't you think," questioned Junior earnestly, "that He'd rather be a little boy?"

And then, without waiting for his query to be answered, Junior dropped back on his pillow and was instantly asleep.

CHAPTER VIII

LOCATING A CONSCIENCE

In the Pendleton household the joy of the Christmas season was sweetness long drawn out. Before the first snow flurry Junior and Judy began planning their Christmas gifts and invariably with the insouciance of millionaires. They had so many to remember. At Christmas time the baby was the most important member of the family from their standpoint, and always headed the list. Then came Mother and Daddy and Aunt Polly and Aunt Ruth and Uncle John and Aunt Sadie and Uncle Jamie and Nancy and Jiggs and Sin and Goldilocks. And it took Pollyanna's best powers of persuasion to keep them from adding the names of all the children of the neighborhood.

Goldilocks was easily provided for. A lump of sugar and a slice of apple, Pollyanna assured the children, was to him the equivalent of a fine Christmas tree and a full stocking. Sin was to be remembered with a catnip ball and a red ribbon. Jiggs, who had a disheartening habit of

outgrowing his collar, was to have a brand new one, large enough to allow for all future thickening of his heavy, bull-dog neck. The children had sat for their photograph early in the fall, and these provided for the formidable list of uncles and aunts. And they held long conferences with their mother to decide what to give their father, and consulted their father daily, with the most ostentatious secrecy, as to the most desirable gift for their mother. And both parents were called on frequently to help decide the all-important question of what to give the baby.

Pollyanna was anxious that, from the very beginning, their Christmas planning should extend beyond their own little circle and include the idea of giving happiness to those less fortunate than themselves. She went about it tactfully, for she wished the suggestion to come from the children's awakened sympathies, rather than from herself.

When she and Jimmy discussed in Junior's presence the desirability of making a contribution to the Near East Relief, as part of their Christmas giving, Junior listened with the closest attention. Encouraged by his air of interest, Pollyanna emphasized the distressful situation such gifts would help to relieve. Junior said

nothing at the time, but he was so evidently pondering the subject that she was certain of hearing from him before long. And indeed at bedtime, that hour so fruitful of confidences, Junior introduced the topic of his own volition.

"Mother, do you want me to send some of my Christmas money to those little boys'n' girls you were telling Daddy about?"

Pollyanna's heart swelled with triumph.

"If you want to do it, little son," she answered, as she stroked his hair, "it would please mother very much."

Junior deliberated.

"Did you say they was a-starvin', Mother?"

"Some of them are, Junior."

"Well, if it's such a long way, I guess by the time my money got there they'd all have starved to death. I'd rather give it to somebody nearer."

It was through the laundress that Pollyanna learned of a family which combined the requisites of proximity and poverty. The laundress, Mrs. Todd, was a hard-working, self-respecting woman who looked down on the recipients of public charity from immeasurable heights. But for a neighbor, a certain Mrs. Bunting, deserted by her husband and left with six children to support, her contempt was blended with pity.

"I don't say she's not a poor thing, mum. If

she hadn't been, she'd have shook that man of hers before he had a chance to shake her. But she's doing her best and the children ain't as bad as most and there won't be no merry Christmas in that fambly, unless somebody gives it to 'em, poor souls."

Further inquiries from Mrs. Todd elicited the information that the Bunting family included a boy not far from Junior's age and a little girl three months older than Judy. It was much easier to kindle the children's interest in these objects of charity so close at hand. Almost their first Christmas shopping was for the two Buntings nearest their own ages. Junior bought the boy a miniature fire-engine and Judy expended a quarter on a doll for the little girl.

"And perhaps before Christmas really gets here," Pollyanna told them, "you'll find you can spare some of the toys you're getting tired of for the little Buntings. I'm going to put a basket on one of the shelves in the linen-closet, and, when we come across something that will help make a happy Christmas for those children, we'll put it in the basket.

The plan worked. The next day Junior enriched the basket with a box of blocks, announcing importantly that he was too old to play with blocks any longer, and Judy contributed a tiny

cup that had lost its handle and a scrap of pink silk, the size of a post card. Pollyanna added a suit Junior had outgrown and some little frocks of Judy's. The basket was filling up nicely when one day, as Pollyanna looked its contents over, to be sure the children had put in nothing of which she did not know, she made the discovery that the doll which Judy had purchased for little Mamie Bunting had disappeared.

Pollyanna's perturbation had nothing to do with the value of the doll. As far as that went it could easily be replaced, but the idea that, among her children's playmates, was one who helped herself to whatever took her fancy, was decidedly disturbing. The week had been cold and stormy. Junior and Judy had been indoors most of the time, with Inez as a daily companion, and with numberless visits from the other children of the neighborhood. At least three times, during the week, Genevieve had gone home weeping because in playing school she had been cast for the rôle of pupil instead of teacher, or because Jack Horner had said her hair was red, or for some other equally valid reason. The young Hunts had been frequent callers. There had been as many small boys as girls among the visitors to the nursery, but Pollyanna thought it safe to absolve the former of all responsibility in the

matter. She was sure that the celluloid doll, with its plump stomach and inane smile, was the last thing in the world to appeal to Junior's sex.

She questioned the children to discover if they had taken any of their playmates into their confidence regarding their Christmas benefactions. It appeared that, undeterred by any reluctance to acquaint their left hand with the charities of the right, they had showed the doll and the fire engine to every child who had entered the house. It seemed, however, that, though they had displayed their gifts so complacently, they had refused to allow them to be touched.

"I guess Mamie Bunting would cwy if her dolly got all broked," said Judy in her flute-like voice; and Pollyanna resolved to replace the doll immediately, before Judy's heart was broken by learning of its mysterious disappearance.

She removed the basket from the low shelf in the linen-closet to the high one in the closet in her own room, warning the children not to try to reach it. For the next few days she felt as if she owed an apology to every small girl who entered the house, because, almost against her will, she was scrutinizing her to decide whether or not she was guilty of purloining the doll designed to make a merry Christmas for little Mamie Bunting.

One evening, about a week before Christmas, Jimmy was called from his perusal of the newspaper to assist Pollyanna in subduing a refractory window shade. When he returned to his easy chair, Judy was leaning against it, her attention riveted on a cartoon intended to emphasize the appeal in behalf of the city's hundred neediest cases. So steadily did she gaze upon the sheet that it looked as if she were reading, and Jimmy, much amused, called Pollyanna's attention to the motionless little figure. Pollyanna looked, smiled lovingly, and then glanced at the clock.

"Oh, it's later than I thought," she exclaimed. "Judy!"

Judy did not stir.

"Don't you hear mother, darling? It's bedtime."

Judy turned upon her a look of such utter distress that Pollyanna was startled.

"Muvver," she quavered, "what makes the little girl cwy?"

Pollyanna gave her attention to the work of art which had occasioned Judy's question. A woman in the last stages of consumption, to judge from the hollow cheeks and temples, sat in a rickety chair, holding a gaunt infant to her breast. Beside her stood a little girl, thin,

ragged, with dejection evident in every line of her drooping figure, and with tears upon her cheeks.

Pollyanna was sorry Judy had seen the picture. The tragic intensity of her upraised face showed her too sensitive to be confronted with so sombre a phase of life. She answered reassuringly, "The little girl is crying because she is poor. But somebody is going to help her to have a merry Christmas and then she will smile."

"Is she cwying 'cause she wants a dolly?"

Pollyanna saw her chance to impart comfort.

"I'm sure she wants a doll. All little girls do. And, when she gets one on Christmas eve, she'll be very happy."

She felt that this assurance should restore Judy's customary cheerfulness, and was disappointed when the child unsmilingly kissed her father good-night and mounted the stairs in a contemplative silence, as if part of the world's burdens rested heavily on her small shoulders.

It was one of the evenings when Judy's prayers seemed unending. Junior galloped through his petitions, tumbled into bed and fell asleep while Judy droned on. She prayed for all the members of the household, including Jiggs, Sin and Goldilocks. She prayed for each of the family

connections by name. She began on the neighborhood, apparently resolved to do her duty by each individual.

"Don't you think, dear," suggested Pollyanna, uneasily recalling the doll's wardrobe downstairs, on which so many stitches were yet to be taken, "that you might say, 'and bless all my other friends.'"

Judy, her eyes squeezed tightly shut, her plump little hands folded in a charming pretext of devotion, ignored the suggestion.

"An' bless Mr. Hunt—an' Albert Hunt—an' Arthur Hunt—an' Cornelia Hunt—an' Lizabef Hunt—an' Sara Hunt—an' Mr. Wilkins—an' Mrs. Wilkins—an' Genevieve Wilkins—an' don't let her cwy so much—an' Mr. Hamilton—an' Mrs. Hamilton—an' Florence Hamilton—and Mr.—"

The roster of the neighborhood was exhausted at last, in spite of Pollyanna's fears that it would last till midnight. Then, as she kissed Judy good-night, two plump little arms went around her neck in a strangling clasp.

"Muvver, tell me a story."

"Oh, I can't, dear, possibly. You see I've got to help Santa Claus out, he has so many little children to look after."

"I want a drink of water."

Pollyanna laughed, realizing that Judy was playing for time.

"You had a drink just before you came upstairs, darling. You can't be thirsty again. Now go to sleep just as fast as you can. Maybe you'll dream about a Christmas tree."

Pollyanna was working little button holes on the nightgown for Judy's Christmas doll, and Jimmy was reading "The Christmas Carol" aloud to her, as he always did at this season, when his ear caught a signal of distress from the floor above. He laid down his book to listen.

"Why, is that one of the children?" he exclaimed.

"What is it, Jimmy?"

"Sounds to me like somebody crying softly."

Pollyanna flew up the stairs. Jimmy had not been mistaken. Judy lay in her bed, the tears rolling over her round cheeks, sobbing quietly. As a rule Judy was dramatic in her emotions and this subdued grief was more alarming to her mother than any noisy outburst.

She leaned tenderly over the little bed.

"What's the matter, darling?"

"It—it hurts," gulped Judy.

"Where does it hurt?"

"Here."

Judy clapped her hand to the pit of her plump

little stomach and burst into a passion of weeping.

Pollyanna went for the hot water bag.

"Did you have anything to eat today that mother didn't know about?" she asked, when she had taken steps toward making the little sufferer comfortable.

"No, Muvver," Judy sobbed.

"You're sure none of the children brought over cake or candy?"

"Truly they didn't, Muvver."

"Then I guess it won't hurt long. Try to go to sleep."

But, even with the hot water bag on her stomach, and her mother's hand resting on her forehead, Judy continued to sob, and presently Jimmy came into the room, looking anxious.

"Don't you think," he asked in a carefully lowered voice, after listening to Pollyanna's explanations, "that we'd better call the doctor."

"She doesn't seem at all feverish," Pollyanna replied. "And certainly, if it were serious, she'd have a temperature." She turned again to her patient. "Do you feel better, dear?"

"No," wailed Judy with astonishing vehemence. "It hurts awful."

Pollyanna began to think that Jimmy was right; but, before she could send him to the

phone to summon the doctor, Judy had clutched her arm.

"Muvver," she demanded tragically, "is the little girl in the picture crying 'cause I tooked her dolly?"

Pollyanna's heart jumped. The first explanation that occurred to her was that the child was delirious. Then a second thought made her lay a detaining hand on Jimmy's arm.

"What dolly do you mean, Judy?"

"The one I tooked out of the basket."

"Where did you put it?"

Judy jumped out of her bed, the hot water bag falling to the floor with a protesting gurgle. She marched into the nursery, her parents following, and seated herself in front of a doll's trunk, an extravagant gift from Aunt Ruth, provided with a substantial lock and key. Judy unlocked the trunk, took out the tray, removed a number of articles and finally, from the bottom, produced something wrapped in a piece of blue outing flannel. The wrapping removed, there was the doll intended for Mamie Bunting's Christmas present.

For a moment Pollyanna found herself incapable of speech. She was not foolish enough to exaggerate the importance of Judy's wrongdoing. Like Achan she had seen and coveted,

had taken and hidden. There was nothing surprising in that. What appalled Judy's mother was the way the little girl had kept her counsel, her non-committal manner, her baffled look of innocence.

Pollyanna had known of children, given the fruit of the tree of knowledge by unhallowed hands, whose mothers had never found it out, and she had always wondered how that were possible. Now she knew. What tragic lack of understanding in the past, she wondered, could have made childhood so terribly on its guard, so competent to keep its secrets. For the moment she was dumb, aghast at the vastness of her responsibility.

She spoke very gently at last.

"That was selfish, wasn't it, darling? For you have so many things, and poor Mamie has so little."

"She cwied 'cause she wanted her dolly," Judy said with conviction.

Pollyanna perceived that to Judy the flesh-and-blood Mamie Bunting was the vaguest of shadows, while the weeping child in the picture had all the substance of reality. She escorted Judy back to bed and picked up the hot water bag from the floor. "Do you want this again?"

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"Doesn't hurt now," answered Judy, and she snuggled down against her pillow, with a sigh of vast relief.

Jimmy was inclined to find the whole affair very amusing and to laugh at Pollyanna for taking it seriously. And Pollyanna went so far as to admit that she was glad it had happened.

"I'm glad, Jimmy, because it shows me how hard a mother must work to gain her children's confidence. Just being loving and sympathetic isn't enough. Oh, that inscrutable little face! And then," she continued, her own face brightening, "I'm so glad her conscience troubled her without my saying a word. She didn't want to be found out, bless her!"

"There's still another reason for you to congratulate yourself," Jimmy remarked gravely. "The fact that a man's heart is in his stomach was established long ago, and now, thanks to Judy, we know that the conscience has exactly the same location."

CHAPTER IX

CHRISTMAS SURPRISES

Now that Judy's conscience was at ease, the Christmas preparations went on merrily. Jimmy visited the Buntings with two big baskets on Christmas Eve, and, on his return, the children, who had been allowed to sit up beyond their usual bedtime, put him through one of the relentless cross-examinations familiar to all fathers and mothers.

"Did the little girl cwy?" This was Judy's opening gun.

"Cry! I should say not. She was tickled to death with her doll. She smiled clear back to her ears."

"She did cwy once," insisted Judy, to whom the forlorn child of the artist's cartoon had come to be an actual personality. "She cwied 'cause I tooked her dolly."

"Did the boy like his fire-engine?" demanded Junior, in his turn.

"Very much. He's a rather quiet boy, but I could see he was pleased."

"What's his name, Daddy?"

"Dan, I believe."

"Is he bigger'n me or littler?"

"About the same height, I should say, but not as heavy."

"Could I throw him in a wrastle, Daddy?"

"Don't know."

"But what do you think? You can tell what you think, can't you, Daddy?"

"Then I think he would probably throw you."

This was far from being satisfactory to Junior.

"But, Daddy," he persisted, "what makes you think he could throw me?"

"I think he's had more training along that particular line."

"What's training?"

Jimmy looked appealingly at Pollyanna and she came to the rescue, by pronouncing it bedtime.

"You must be sound asleep when Santa Claus comes," she reminded the children.

Junior looked very knowing. At the kindergarten he had encountered some disillusioned juveniles who, like most of the disenchanted, could not rest satisfied till they had destroyed the illusions of others. Junior had come home in a state of great excitement, and his mother had both comforted and enlightened him, ex-

plaining in terms suited to his comprehension, that Santa Claus was the personification of the good-will and kindness of the Christmas season, and that, while he was sufficiently advanced in years to understand all about it, just as grown people did, Judy and the baby were still too young to share his knowledge. The honor of being classed with adults almost compensated Junior for the loss of his faith in childhood's patron saint, and, whenever Santa Claus was mentioned, as he was frequently these days, he all but winked at his mother, in recognition of the secret they shared.

After the children were in bed and had ceased to call interrogations over the bannisters, Jimmy and Pollyanna had a wonderful time filling the stockings and trimming the tree. There was a real fireplace in the living room. For a week it had been merely ornamental, since Judy was so concerned as to the size of the chimney, that, had a fire been built, she would probably have tumbled into it. As a background for Christmas preparations, however, the fireplace was ideal, and Pollyanna, viewing the stockings dangling against the red brick, asked Jimmy if it wasn't exactly like a Christmas card.

The only drawback to the peace of the evening was Jiggs. A package wrapped in paper

always excited Jiggs, and, on this occasion, there were so many of them that he quite lost his head. He dashed wildly about the room, sniffing, pawing, and occasionally barking. He jumped at the row of stockings and brought Judy's to the floor. He got in the way, and was stepped on times without number. But it was not till he snatched from his mistress' hand a knitted scarf Aunt Polly had sent Junior, and went scurrying through the house, trailing the scarf behind him, that Pollyanna realized the futility of expostulation and command.

"He's so excited that a whipping won't do a bit of good," she told Jimmy. "The only thing is to put him down cellar and keep him there till morning."

Had Pollyanna attempted to carry out her orders, the chances are that she would have relented by the time she reached the cellar door and suspended sentence. But it was Jimmy who collared Jiggs and carried him, struggling and whining, to the cellar stairs. Jiggs had protested on principle, but he was quite unprepared for permanent exile. When the truth burst upon him, he began barking in a staccato, peremptory fashion which betrayed his sense of outrage.

Pollyanna's heart melted at once.

"Poor little fellow! He's simply wretched when he feels he's shut out of things."

"Nonsense, Pollyanna. He'll have to be taught not to make a nuisance of himself. It's a queer thing; you're strict enough with the children, but your discipline breaks down when it comes to Jiggs."

"But I—I wouldn't want to have the children waked up."

"Never fear. The seven sleepers had nothing on our three."

"I wonder if he'll disturb the neighbors."

"If we can stand it, they ought to be able to. Look here, Pollyanna; you know perfectly well you're not worrying about the children or the neighbors. All that bothers you is that spoiled little beast downstairs. But he won't keep this up long. Pretty soon he'll realize that we're not going to pay any attention to him, and then he'll give up and settle down for the night."

Jimmy did less than justice to Jiggs' pertinacity. It was true he did not continue barking uninterruptedly. He paused occasionally and then, after ten or fifteen minutes, broke out again. Indeed, once, during the night, Jimmy roused from a sound sleep to hear Jiggs barking with as much angry animation as if the cellar door had just closed upon him.

"Some persistence, eh?" said Jimmy, addressing Pollyanna, but only the sound of her regular breathing answered him, and Jimmy chuckled mightily.

At the least murmur from the baby's crib, Pollyanna was always instantly wide awake, but she slept undisturbed through a racket that might have disquieted those famous sleepers to whom Jimmy had referred earlier. And, as if he himself had been one of their lineal descendants, Jimmy turned over on his pillow and promptly fell asleep.

The children were in their parents' room before it was fairly daylight. There were shouts of "Merry Christmas." The baby woke up and gurgled delightedly. Pollyanna blinked her eyes open with an effort.

"Climb into bed quick, children, so as not to get cold."

"Can't we go downstairs, Mother, and see what's in our stockings?" Junior begged.

"Not till after breakfast," said Pollyanna firmly. "And a good breakfast, too."

"Can't we peek?"

"Well, if you are dressed before Nancy is ready for us, you may peek, but you mustn't touch a thing."

"Seems to me you're taking a great deal for

granted," teased Jimmy. "If you haven't been downstairs, how do you know that Santa Claus came at all?"

"I saw Santa Claus," Judy answered unexpectedly.

"Oh, you didn't neither," corrected Junior, with the authority of his superior knowledge. "If you saw anybody it was Daddy, wasn't it, Mother?"

"T'wasn't Daddy, either."

"Did he have a white beard and clothes all trimmed with fur?"

"No-o," Judy admitted reluctantly.

"Well, then how do you know it was Santa Claus?"

"'Cause he said so."

Over the children's heads, Jimmy and Pollyanna exchanged smiles. It was quite evident from Judy's earnest air that she was not consciously fabricating an interview with the patron saint of the day, but had had a more than ordinarily vivid dream.

When she added, "He said for me to go back to bed and keep still," even Junior looked a little abashed.

"He couldn't have said for you to go back to bed, 'cause—'cause—could he, Mother?"

"Never mind. I hear Nancy downstairs, so

it's time to get up. Let's see who'll be dressed first."

The house was much colder than usual, Jimmy discovered, and he dressed hastily and went downstairs to see why the furnace was not doing its duty. Nancy guessed the reason for his early appearance, and hastened to set his mind at rest.

"I know the house is cold, Mr. Jimmy, but it's warmin' up fast. I guess Christmas bein' so near was a little too much for me. I must have raised the back kitchen window last night to let out the smell of the cookin' and forgot all about it. You could a' knocked me down with a feather when I saw it this morning."

Jimmy whistled.

"Open all night! Say, Nancy, if it had been as cold as it sometimes is at Christmas, we'd have had some frozen pipes to look after in the morning."

"I know, Mr. Jimmy. I'm that ashamed. It's the first time I ever did such a thing in my life, it is, it is."

When the family came down to breakfast, Judy looked anxiously around the dining room.

"Where's the stockings?"

Junior enlightened her.

"In the fireplace, o'course."

"Santa Claus was out here."

"You keep saying that," objected Junior, "and it's silly. Mother, ain't it silly for Judy to keep saying she saw Santa Claus?"

"Drink your orange juice, Junior, and don't tease Judy. No, Jiggs. You can't have anything to eat in the dining room. Give Judy a little more cream, please, Jimmy. Yes, darling, mother's fixing it."

This last was addressed to the baby who, becoming impatient, was pounding her high chair with her spoon. Jimmy wondered, as he had often wondered before, how Pollyanna succeeded in eating anything at meal time.

But breakfast was over at last, and they gave themselves up to the real business of the day, rifling stockings and opening packages. Nancy left her dishes and came in to share the fun. Jiggs was present, his mood unchastened by the discipline of the previous evening. Sin occupied the most comfortable chair and purred incessantly. In the sunny window, Goldilocks sang a succession of Christmas carols, deserving of closer attention than the absorbed group could give. Nancy, indeed, had thoughts for nothing but the tree. As she gazed upon it, gay with colored electric lights, the tears started to her eyes, perhaps because the fir trees were associ-

ated in her thoughts with her Vermont home.

"I declare, Miss Pollyanna, I don't expect to see a prettier sight than that tree till I see the pearly gates, I don't, I don't!"

In addition to the stuffed stockings and the overflow of gifts on adjacent chairs, there was a formidable pile of boxes and packages that had come by parcel post or by express, and in course of time Pollyanna declared she was ashamed to open another.

"It's almost overwhelming, the way we are remembered. Nobody could possibly deserve as much as we have had today."

Jimmy, armed with chisel and hammer, was about to open the big wooden box which had come from John Pendleton and his wife, but as Pollyanna spoke, he straightened up and regarded her quizzically.

"If you say so, I'll send this back, and ask them to bestow it on more worthy recipients."

"Stop teasing, Jimmy, and get the cover off. Of course I'm perfectly crazy about everything, but nobody could deserve it all."

Inez arrived before John Pendleton's box was opened, and the children greeted her with an enthusiasm their elders did not fully share.

"What did *you* get for Christmas?" Junior

inquired, after calling Inez' attention to the most cherished of his new possessions.

"We haven't had our Christmas yet. My mother said she didn't want anybody to wake her up today. She was awful tired."

"I suppose a gift shop would do its biggest business just before Christmas," said Pollyanna in an undertone to Jimmy, who replied, " I suppose so," and wrenched out a nail vindictively.

The presents had all been opened and admired and the new toys taken up to the nursery when Mrs. McGill rang the bell.

"I'm not coming in. I just ran over to say 'Merry Christmas' and leave these little things for the children."

"Of course you're coming in. The idea of your being on the front porch and not seeing our lovely tree. Won't you go up to the nursery so you can give your presents to the children yourself? Only I'm sorry you did it. They have had so much already that their little heads are spinning."

"It was purely selfish on my part," laughed Mrs. McGill. "You see, Christmas isn't much without kiddies to plan for, and, having none of my own, I made use of yours. Oh, what a noise! It certainly sounds like a good time."

Jimmy was helping Junior lay the tracks on which a miniature locomotive would presently run, but father and son halted in their fascinating occupation to greet Mrs. McGill. And, when Nancy called Pollyanna downstairs to consult her about the dinner, she left Mrs. McGill sitting on the floor, helping Judy dress and undress her Christmas dolls.

The arrival of the burdened postman delayed Pollyanna longer than she had intended, and she was still opening Christmas cards when Mrs. McGill and Jimmy came downstairs together.

"Oh, you're not going, are you?" cried Pollyanna, addressing her neighbor. "If you do, I'll feel I have been terribly rude. But I'm always so impatient to see my Christmas cards that I simply can't resist them."

"Of course she's not going," said Jimmy, speaking for Mrs. McGill. "She's come downstairs to see the tree."

"Oh, yes, it's such a beautiful tree!" Pollyanna jumped briskly to her feet, and turned to lay her mail on the dining table. Then she looked across the room, her eyes bulging. "Why," she exclaimed, "where's my tea service?"

The others turned to look. Mrs. McGill, as well as Jimmy, knew exactly where the tea serv-

ice ordinarily stood on the sideboard, the fine old colonial pieces with their noses in the air, as if in disdain of their modern environment. The set was really an heirloom, and Pollyanna had really protested when Aunt Polly bestowed it upon her.

"It seems to belong to you, Aunt Polly," she had said, "and in your big, old house in Beldingsville. In my little home, it will look out of place."

But Aunt Polly had waved her protests aside and, as usual, had had her own way.

"Probably Nancy has taken it to the kitchen to shine it up for Christmas," Mrs. McGill said, as Pollyanna continued to gaze blankly in the direction of the sideboard.

"No, it was polished yesterday. Oh, Nancy!" Pollyanna turned quickly as Nancy entered the room. "Where did you put the tea service?"

It was not necessary for Nancy to speak. Like Pollyanna she looked at the empty space on the sideboard, and then threw up her hands. The blank horror of her face was sufficient assurance that she knew nothing of the whereabouts of the silver. With a muffled exclamation Jimmy bolted from the room. After two minutes on the back porch he returned to find Nancy in tears.

"Oh, it's all my fault, Miss Pollyanna. If you

pack me off tomorrow, I'll not blame you a mite, I won't, I won't."

Jimmy laid his hand on her arm.

"Easy, Nancy. You've nothing on your conscience. You didn't leave the window up last night. It was forced from the outside. The marks are perfectly plain." Then he started, as his eye fell on Jiggs, looking up at him with an expression of preternatural wisdom. "By Jove," he cried, "that's why Jiggs barked."

"Did he bark in the night?" gasped Pollyanna.

"He certainly did. I supposed he was still resenting the fact that we didn't allow him to help us fill the stockings. And, instead, the little cuss was trying to tell us that something was wrong."

Pollyanna started violently.

"Jimmy," she choked, "could it—do you think —you know what Judy said."

"Gosh!" shouted Judy's father. "You've hit it. And that's why she expected the presents to be in the dining room."

"What is it?" demanded Mrs. McGill, looking wildly from one to the other. "What are you talking about?"

It was Jimmy who did the explaining; and when he finished, Pollyanna began.

"I'm so glad—"

She was not able to get any further, for Mrs.

McGill whirled about and seized her by the shoulders.

"Listen, you extraordinary young woman! Before you say another word, let me make sure my ears are not deceiving me. That beautiful silver service, which has made me break the tenth commandment every time I've seen it, has been stolen. And the first comment you make on the situation is, 'I am glad.' At least that's the way it sounded, but I'm sure I must be mistaken."

Pollyanna's pale lips twitched into a smile.

"Don't you see," she said, "that I have a great deal to be glad about? Suppose Jimmy had come downstairs when he heard Jiggs barking and found that man in the house. He might have been seriously hurt."

"I suppose so," Mrs. McGill assented.

"And Judy! Darling little Judy! It's not likely he'd have hurt her, but she might have got a fright it would have taken her years to overcome. I'm so glad he was quick-witted enough to tell her he was Santa Claus and that she must go upstairs and be quiet. I thought I was as glad as possible before this happened," said Pollyanna, her bright color beginning to come back, "but that gladness was nothing to this."

Mrs. McGill sighed and shook her head, implying that the matter was beyond her, and Jimmy remarked, "Apparently you haven't taken your neighbors into your confidence, about your Game, my dear."

"Now, Jimmy!"

"What game do you mean?" questioned Mrs. McGill, alert on the instant. "If it is anything that helps to explain this wife of yours, Mr. Pendleton, I want to know about it, for, every time I see her, she gives me a fresh surprise."

And so, little by little, the story was told, much of it drawn out by Mrs. McGill's questions, and aided by frequent promptings from Jimmy. And when she stepped out into the morning again, apologizing for having stayed so long, Mrs. McGill was thinking not so much of the Christmas tree, or even of the laughing children upstairs, as of the little crutches in the missionary barrel, and the Game that had helped make Pollyanna what she was.

CHAPTER X

AUNT POLLY

AUNT POLLY came soon after New Year's. For days Pollyanna had gone about so radiant with anticipation that it excited Mrs. McGill's curiosity.

"Is it just because your aunt is coming that you look so happy? Or is it part of that wonderful Game of yours?"

Pollyanna laughed. "There isn't any need to play the Glad Game now," she asserted. "Aunt Polly's coming is enough in itself."

"Is she going to make a long visit?"

Pollyanna hesitated.

"I'm not sure that it will be a visit. I rather think Aunt Polly will make her home with us, after this."

"Oh!"

The monosyllable was non-committal, but apparently Pollyanna did not notice.

"You see, I went to live with her when I was eleven years old. She was almost a mother to me. When we were married, we lived in a tiny

apartment in New York and, of course, Aunt Polly wouldn't have been happy there. But now we can make her comfortable, and, as she is growing older all the time, it doesn't seem quite the thing for her to be living alone so far away from us all. And of course," beamed Pollyanna, "she'll enjoy the children so much."

"I suppose she's very fond of children."

The question took Pollyanna by surprise. She gave a little start, as if confronted with a possibility that had never before occurred to her.

"Why—I don't know that I should call Aunt Polly a lover of children in general. But my children, of course—"

"Oh, of course!" Mrs. McGill hastened to reassure her. "She'll be fond of your children, anyway. She'll probably be a great help to you."

Pollyanna offered no opinion as to that.

"Aunt Polly has just sold the old homestead in Vermont. A friend of Mr. Pendleton's—my husband's adopted father, you know—wanted it for a summer home and paid her a splendid price for it. And so Aunt Polly is more independent than she has been for years."

Aunt Polly arrived a few days later. She was as straight as when Pollyanna knew her first, and her dark hair was only slightly streaked with grey; but she had reached that period in life

when most people find it difficult to accommodate themselves to new situations. And, if the truth be told, adaptability had never been Aunt Polly's strong point.

A woman of resolute will, for long years head of her household, she failed to realize that in Pollyanna's home she was no longer captain of the craft, but merely a passenger. Indeed, dearly as she loved Pollyanna, she was inclined to regard her as an irresponsible child, who needed guidance just as Junior and Judy did.

Aunt Polly arrived one Saturday forenoon and, as they went down to a one o'clock luncheon, Jiggs, who understood the summons of the Chinese gong as well as any of them, dashed on ahead. He took up his position close to Pollyanna's chair. Aunt Polly, following at a more leisurely pace, spied him and at once announced an ultimatum.

"Oh, this will never do. We can't have dogs in the dining room."

"Jiggs always come to meals, 'less there's company," Junior retorted, and he, too, had an air of delivering an ultimatum.

"You see, we don't feed him, Aunt Polly," Pollyanna explained hastily. "He just sits and looks on, and is as good as a dog can be. Really he is."

"My dear Pollyanna, you certainly don't need to be told that a dining room is no place for a dog, especially at mealtime." Aunt Polly walked to the front door, puckered her lips in a whistle which aroused Junior's scorn, and then, as Jiggs ignored this summons, addressed him in plain English. "Come, sir, come along! Your room is better than your company."

Jiggs sat like a graven statue of propriety, looking at her out of the corner of his eye, and, with a heavy heart, Pollyanna undertook to uphold Aunt Polly's authority.

"I'm afraid he doesn't understand," she said sadly. "Come, Jiggs."

Jiggs understood only too well. As he followed his mistress to the door, he cast a malevolent glance at Aunt Polly. Already she had made an enemy in the household.

"He looks like a bad-tempered dog," said Aunt Polly, closing the door. "You'd better keep an eye on him, Pollyanna, and, if he shows signs of becoming vicious, you must get rid of him at once."

And Pollyanna was thankful that Junior, engaged in a discussion with Inez Richards, did not hear.

Since it was Saturday, Inez had arrived soon after breakfast, and, as usual, remained for lunch-

eon. As they seated themselves, Aunt Polly scrutinized her appraisingly.

"Who is this little girl, Pollyanna?"

"This is the little daughter of one of my neighbors, Aunt Polly. Her name is Inez Richards."

"My mother works," chirped Inez, attacking her luncheon with relish.

"Hm!" mused Aunt Polly. And then, addressing her niece, "I hope you're not allowing yourself to be imposed on, Pollyanna." Aunt Polly was evidently not favorably impressed.

Pollyanna blushed to the roots of her hair. Of course it was true that she was being imposed on, but she could not discuss the matter before Inez.

Luckily Jiggs created a diversion. Ejected from the front door, he had presented himself at the back of the house, giving one or two of his sharp, peremptory barks which the dullest could translate to mean, "Here I am. Open the door and be quick about it." Nancy, knowing nothing of the new edict, answered his summons as promptly as if he had rung the door bell, wiped off his feet, and admitted him again to the dining room. As Jiggs bolted in, grinning ecstatically over getting the better of Aunt Polly, the children roared a welcome.

Pollyanna looked across the table appealingly,

as if she hoped to see signs of relenting in Aunt Polly's countenance. And reading there something very different, she rose meekly and led the way to the kitchen.

"Nancy, please put Jiggs out of doors and don't let him in again till we have finished luncheon."

She knew it was cowardly to turn the responsibility over to Nancy, but she could not find it in her heart to eject Jiggs the second time. Already his triumphant ears had lost their perkiness, his tail drooped dejectedly, and she realized that Nancy's submissive, "All right, Miss Pollyanna," showed only too complete an understanding.

That first day was typical. Aunt Polly, full of energy, accustomed all her life to dictate, gradually assumed the duties of the head of the house.

"That soup was altogether too fresh, Nancy," she would remark as Nancy removed the soup plates at dinner. "Salt added at the table isn't the same thing at all, you know."

If Pollyanna had a suggestion to offer, she never thought of giving it before an audience, and Nancy's cheeks flushed, for all her silent acceptance of the reproof, and in the kitchen she

set the soup plates down with quite unnecessary violence.

In the case of the children, too, Aunt Polly was continually interfering. As she had never had children of her own, she naturally looked upon herself as an authority on the subject of child-training. Sometimes she criticized Pollyanna for being too severe, but more often found fault with her for being too lenient; and she made no secret of her conviction that, one way or the other, Pollyanna was always wrong. Poor Pollyanna would not have minded this so much if her aunt had confined herself to criticism. It was when she began to assume control of the children that the real trouble began. Even Judy resented her assumption of authority, especially as Aunt Polly forbade many things to which Pollyanna herself would never have thought of objecting. As for Junior, he showed his resentment so openly as to lead Aunt Polly to say, "I'm afraid you're spoiling that boy of yours, Pollyanna. He needs a firmer hand."

With growing uneasiness Jimmy realized the changed atmosphere of his house. He had been glad when Aunt Polly came, because this was what Pollyanna wanted, and he meant that she should have everything she wanted as far as it

was possible for him to give it to her. And now, for the first time in his married life, he found himself wrestling with a perplexity he could not confide to his wife.

"I've always thought the mother-in-law joke a disgrace to a civilized sense of humor," he said to John Pendleton one day, as he lunched with his foster-father at the latter's club. "But I find it's beginning to appeal to me."

Mr. Pendleton shook his head over his oysters.

"Oh, come," he remonstrated. "Polly Chilton is a fine woman, one of the finest." He smiled good-naturedly.

"I don't doubt that. In fact, that's the reason I've been willing to overlook a good deal. You know Mrs. Chilton has had it in for me since I was a small boy. Of course I've told you of the time Pollyanna brought me to her, thinking she'd take me in, as she had some homeless cats and dogs, and she called me a little beggar."

"Nonsense, Jimmy! You don't mean you're going to lay that up against her after all these years."

"Then, when I wanted to marry Pollyanna," Jimmy continued stubbornly, "she did her best to queer the whole thing. It was all right as far as Pollyanna was concerned, but Mrs. Chilton insisted her niece couldn't marry a man who

knew nothing about his family. But we fixed that up at last—you remember."

"Well, rather," said John Pendleton, and drew a deep breath. Jimmy's terse statement of the facts had evoked many memories. He recalled his indignation when his adopted son had come to him with the news that Mrs. Chilton did not consider a man who did not know his rightful name an eligible suitor for her niece, no matter what his personal qualifications might be. And then they had discovered the papers which proved that Jimmy, and not Jamie, was the nephew of Mrs. Carew, with the blue Wetherby blood in his veins. Mr. Pendleton interrupted his luncheon to turn and lay his hand almost caressingly on Jimmy's shoulder.

Jimmy looked at him perplexed.

"What is it, sir?"

"Oh, nothing! Nothing!" muttered Mr. Pendleton and returned hastily to his meal. He realized that he had almost betrayed himself. The pride and affection which had thrilled him years before, when Jimmy had refused to take advantage of the great discovery, except so far as to remove Mrs. Chilton's prejudice, had come over him so irresistibly that he had almost been led into an exhibition of sentiment, a weakness against which the average American is always

on his guard. But, as he attacked his plate with misleading heartiness, Mr. Pendleton was thinking, "Gave up his rights so that Jamie might go on believing himself the lost boy. They don't make 'em any finer than Jim."

"I'm ready," continued Jimmy insistently, as if he realized that his listener's attention was straying from his recital, "to forgive what's past and done with, even though I think she never gave me a fair deal. But I'll be hanged if I can forgive her for what she's doing now."

"What *is* she doing now?"

"Setting everybody by the ears," cried Jimmy, from the depths of his sore heart. "Even Jiggs detests her so that, when she comes into a room where he is, he simply rises and moves as far from her as he can. She's making Junior sulky and Judy pert. Even our Pollyanna isn't herself."

"Oh, come," said Mr. Pendleton again. "You exaggerate."

His confidence that Pollyanna could never be anything but her sunny self made Jimmy smile, serious as his mood was.

"What I mean," he explained, "is that this is getting on Pollyanna's nerves. Mrs. Chilton treats her as if she were a child. And she's been

there only three weeks. What will it be like after she's stayed years?"

Mr. Pendleton made no attempt to answer that question. He contented himself with giving Jimmy considerable good advice, to keep himself well in hand, not to exaggerate trifles, and to remember that, after all, his wife owed a great deal to her Aunt Polly. Luncheon over, Jimmy went back to his work with the sense of relief which comes from confiding one's troubles to a sympathetic listener, while John Pendleton was conscious of a distinct feeling of uneasiness. He told his wife that it was a shame that, when the young folks were doing so well, Polly Chilton had to come along and spill the beans.

And then, without warning, something happened which, in his most apprehensive moments, Jimmy would not have believed possible. He and Pollyanna quarreled. It was not a mere misunderstanding, not a clash of opinions, not one of those ripples on the surface of domestic tranquility that are inevitable in the best regulated families; but an actual quarrel, standing out unique in their experience.

It was Jiggs who was indirectly responsible for this catastrophe, for when the family came into the living room after dinner, Jiggs was occupy-

ing the chair Aunt Polly preferred. She went over to him briskly, and Jiggs, opening one eye, looked up at her like a little gnome.

"Get down, sir," she said sharply. And then, addressing Pollyanna, "This dog mustn't be allowed to lie on the upholstered chairs. He'll ruin them."

Pollyanna did not reply, and Jiggs did not move. He merely regarded Aunt Polly from the only optic on duty, as if waiting to see what she would do next.

"You're a very naughty dog," pronounced Aunt Polly, and took him by the collar with the intention of removing him forcibly from the coveted chair. But, as she touched him, Jiggs changed mysteriously. The hair of his neck bristled under her hand. He uttered a low, warning growl. Aunt Polly started back in real consternation.

"He's growling. I always said that dog looked ill-natured. He's positively dangerous."

Jimmy rose, jerked Jiggs from his chair, and gave him the hardest whipping of his life, which Jiggs, puppy as he was, endured without a whimper. Then his master carried him to the cellar door and shut it upon him with a finality which Jiggs understood to mean that he was banished for the night.

Junior understood it, too. His chest swelling, he stood looking at Aunt Polly.

"You made him do it," he burst out. "You keep picking on him."

"Junior," his mother cried aghast.

"Well, she does, Mother. She's always fussing at poor Jiggs. It's all her fault."

"Junior, tell Aunt Polly you're sorry, or go upstairs to bed."

Junior faced his great-aunt, a sombre fire in his eyes.

"I'm sorry," he muttered. And then, as if his seething emotions had triumphed over motives of policy, he added,—"that you pick on Jiggs so."

"Junior!"

"I'm sorry," he said quickly. Apparently he meant to stop there, but again resentment swept him on, "—that you acted so mean I had to say it."

"Go to bed directly, Junior, and, unless you apologize to Aunt Polly properly, don't expect Mother to kiss you good-night."

Junior went upstairs roaring lustily.

"If he were my child," said Aunt Polly, seating herself in the chair Jiggs had vacated, and taking up the evening paper, "I shouldn't allow him to make such a noise. It's only half an hour before his bedtime, anyway."

The evening was a rather silent one. Jimmy had brought home a book on engineering and he read absorbedly, never saying a word. Pollyanna had her usual pile of mending, but she was not in a talkative mood. Junior had failed to express any contrition for his rudeness to Aunt Polly, and had cried himself to sleep without his mother's good-night kiss. Pollyanna knew that Jiggs lay on the topmost of the cellar stairs, his nose to the crack of the door.

Such liveliness as the evening possessed was due to Aunt Polly's dropping into the silence an occasional comment, called out by some newspaper item. "'Trouble Brewing in the Balkans,'" she read. "I should think those Balkan States would be like the Kilkenny cats and there wouldn't be any of them left to fight." And then, after a little, "'Skirts to Be Shorter.' Anybody who tried to keep up with the styles would have a busy time lengthening and shortening again."

Pollyanna generally murmured some response to the observations, but, as a matter of fact, she had never felt less inclined to conversation in her life.

Aunt Polly went upstairs about ten o'clock, wishing them a cheerful good-night, and hardly had the door of her room closed behind her when

Jimmy threw his book on the table. At once Pollyanna knew that he had not been reading at all, but had sat there turning the pages, waiting for Aunt Polly to go. The sound of his voice corroborated her intuition.

"Pollyanna," he said sternly, "I think you were very unjust to Junior."

"Unjust!" She stared at him blankly. Somehow his face seemed a mask that hid the real Jimmy from her. "Then you didn't hear what he said to Aunt Polly."

"Yes, I heard him. And he was perfectly right. She picks on the dog and she's spoiling him. She picks on the boy and she's spoiling him, too."

Of all conflicts that take place in the human soul, the conflict of loyalties is the most distressing. Pollyanna, loving her husband, loving her boy, loving Aunt Polly, felt the strain of her clashing sympathies. But she did not yield an inch.

"Junior deserved a severer punishment than I gave him," she persisted. "He was dreadfully impertinent."

"He told the truth. No wonder children get confused when they are punished for lying and then punished quite as severely for truth-telling."

The bitterness of Jimmy's tone astonished Pol-

lyanna. She did not realize, nor did he, that he was championing not only Junior's cause but that of another boy, whose pride had winced long before under the lash of Aunt Polly's tongue. Perplexed and hurt, Pollyanna nevertheless stood her ground.

"Junior must learn that he can't be rude to older people whenever he does not approve of what they do or say. And above all, he must not be rude to Aunt Polly to whom I owe everything."

"I should have thought you owed something to your husband and children."

"I owe it to my son to make a gentleman of him, if I can. It won't be my fault if I fail."

The eyes of both were flashing. Up to this crisis in their married life, either because of good luck or good sense, they had avoided being angry at the same time. If Pollyanna was unreasonable, Jimmy had kept his poise and soon laughed her out of it. If Jimmy was cross, Pollyanna had soon coaxed him into a more amiable frame of mind. But now they had both lost their heads. Both were angry and ready for the absurdities that anger induces.

"I suppose," said Jimmy, white to the lips, "you mean that my unfortunate example is likely

to interfere with your success in making your son a gentleman."

If Pollyanna had laughed, all might have been well; but, instead, she threw him a glance of angry contempt, which, to his unnatural sensitiveness, seemed to confirm the accusation. Jimmy started up.

"I can't stand this," he cried.

He went to the closet, found his hat and overcoat, and, with the latter on his arm, marched from the house. Pollyanna sat without moving. An unworthy pride sealed her lips. She was not going to call him back. This was all his fault. He had forced this quarrel on her, because she had punished Junior for a rudeness for which he himself would ordinarily have inflicted a far severer penalty. As the door slammed shut, she got to her feet, stared dully out into the night, and then sat down again, her hand against her heart. Her husband had left her in anger. The foundations of the world seemed shaken.

After a little, as her nerves steadied, she saw the truth quite clearly. Both she and Jimmy had been under a strain for the last month. She loved Aunt Polly, but she faced the fact that she had made life very hard. Jimmy had said that Aunt Polly was spoiling Jiggs and spoiling Jun-

ior. She had resented his words, but now she admitted that he was right. Their mistake had been in not recognizing the problem as a mutual one, and joining forces to find the best solution.

Pollyanna picked up her needle and went on with her darning. She would sit there till he returned and tell him she was sorry before he had a chance to speak. Her pride was swept away by an onrushing current of tenderness and contrition. It did not matter that Jimmy, too, had been at fault. Love does not keep a ledger, balancing accounts at the end of each twenty-four hours.

At eleven o'clock Pollyanna stopped work and put away her mending. He would be back very soon. She strained her ears and her nerves played her false, counterfeiting the sound of footsteps when no one was passing. Occasionally a pedestrian went by, and each time Pollyanna sprang to her feet and ran to the door to let Jimmy in. And each time the footsteps went on and she stood looking out into the darkness, white-lipped and with tragic eyes.

At twelve o'clock she took a book and tried to read, her common sense doing battle with crowding, intangible fears. She must be sensible, self-controlled, or she would be ill next day. Of course he would come very soon. But sup-

pose he did not? As her growing terror shrieked the question, her heart seemed to stop aghast and then to leap ahead. How could she live if he did not come?

It was a little after one when footsteps came up the walk, but Pollyanna did not run to open the door. She sat motionless, not stirring even when Jimmy stood over her. But, looking down into her colorless face, he somehow realized what had happened.

"Pollyanna!"

He went down on his knees and flung his arms about her. "I'm all kinds of a brute, but not so much of one as you think. I haven't been out sulking all this time. Let me tell you what happened."

She dropped her head against his shoulder with a long, quivering sigh, and he tightened his clasp, hurrying on with his story.

"There was an automobile accident up at the north end of town. I ran into it half an hour after I left you. The car was overturned and I worked with the others, getting the poor chap out. And then he wanted me to go for his wife and bring her to the hospital. I'm afraid he's pretty badly hurt. I tell you, darling, that sort of a thing teaches a fellow to kick himself for making mountains out of molehills."

She lay so limp against his heart that he could not be sure she was hearing him.

He explained humbly, "I tried to find a chance to telephone you. I hoped you were in bed and asleep."

A little shivering ghost of a laugh was Pollyanna's answer to that. "Abed and asleep!" And, as if he had begun to understand at last, he crushed her to him. "Forgive me, dearest. I don't deserve it, but forgive me anyway."

"Well, I'm—g-glad it happened," sobbed Pollyanna, after a protracted interval. "For it's so-so t-terrible that we must never let it happen again."

Jimmy agreed with her conclusion, but not with her premise. He was as determined as she that it must never happen again, but he could not be glad that it had happened even once. In his heart he knew that he could not forgive himself for what Pollyanna had suffered in those hours of waiting. And he was very much afraid that, however hard he tried, he would never forgive Aunt Polly.

CHAPTER XI

ENLIGHTENMENT

THE strained situation in the Pendleton household was somewhat relieved when Aunt Polly rediscovered an old school friend, in the person of a well-to-do widow, living in Boston. The renewal of their intimacy was a pleasure to Pollyanna and her family, to Aunt Polly herself, and lastly, but not least, to the widow in question, Matilda Aldrich.

Mrs. Aldrich was an inoffensive person who all her life had been under somebody's thumb. Her strong-willed mother had dominated her so completely that her personality had never got beyond the dependent stage. Matilda's mother told her when to wear her rubbers and when to go to bed and when to put on her winter underwear. And when at length a suitor presented himself, entirely satisfactory from the maternal standpoint, she told Matilda it was time she was getting married. Matilda obligingly did it, just as she went upstairs to bed, in the middle of a chapter, if her mother said it was bedtime.

The lamented Mr. Aldrich had continued the process of domination his mother-in-law had so effectively inaugurated. He regulated his wife's dress, chose her friends, selected her books, and instructed her in the opinions he considered it suitable for her to hold. And when he died, two years before the renewal of her friendship with Mrs. Chilton, Matilda had felt very much like a shadow detached from its substance. She had been ruled with an iron hand so long that she missed it unspeakably. Like a bird so accustomed to captivity that the only use it makes of its freedom is to seek another cage, the frightened, irresolute woman shrank from the necessity of deciding for herself, and longed for a dictator.

On the occasion of their first meeting the two old friends were irresistibly attracted to each other. Each possessed the quality necessary for the other's happiness. The submissiveness of Matilda was as honey to Aunt Polly's tongue, and the autocratic instincts of Aunt Polly seemed a heavenly refuge to poor, bewildered Matilda. She could not see too much of her former schoolmate. When Aunt Polly went to town to take luncheon in Mrs. Aldrich's beautifully appointed apartment, she was quite likely to telephone that Matilda had tickets for the opera, and that she

had persuaded her to spend the night. And on such occasions Pollyanna was regretfully conscious of a sensation of buoyancy as if some crushing weight had been lifted.

It was on one of the occasions when Aunt Polly had telephoned not to expect her till morning that Pollyanna decided it was an opportune time for returning Mrs. Richards' call. She was growing more and more reluctant to go out with Jimmy in the evening, leaving the children in charge of Aunt Polly; for, on the few occasions she had tried it, a story of dire calamity had awaited her on her return. Either Junior and Judy had indulged in a pillow-fight and broken a vase, or the baby had had colic, or Jiggs had chewed something. At dinner she broached the subject to Jimmy, and, while Jimmy was no more enthusiastic about social calls than the average husband, he, too, was in a light-hearted mood and ready to fall in with any suggestion. Nancy smilingly promised to keep an eye on the children, adding that they were lambs and never a mite of trouble. Junior and Judy, while regretting their parents' projected departure, pledged themselves to be as good as gold, and looked so cherubic, as they said it, that Pollyanna almost feared for them the proverbial fate of precocious virtue.

It is not possible for the parents of real flesh and blood children to cherish such apprehensions long. That evening Junior halted in the midst of his prayers to say, "Mother, I'm not going to ask God to bless Aunt Polly."

"Junior!"

The unqualified horror in his mother's tone caused the boy to squirm uneasily.

"Listen, Mother," he protested. "You see, if God wants to bless Aunt Polly, He can do it, but He needn't do it just to please me."

It was considerably after eight when Jimmy and Pollyanna reached the Richards' pretty home and, in place of the formidable Mary, Mr. Richards himself opened the door. Before Pollyanna could introduce herself, Inez dashed through the hall and flung herself upon the callers with an abandon literally staggering.

"Hello, Mrs. Pendleton!" she screamed "Hello, Mr. Pendleton! Did you come to see me? Why didn't you bring Junior and Judy?"

Pollyanna laughed, partly at Inez' exuberance, and partly at her father's expression of surprise, at these indications of intimacy.

"Junior and Judy are in bed, dear," she explained. "And the baby has been asleep for two hours. We've really come to see your father and mother."

Although Inez immediately rushed upstairs shouting, "Mother, Mrs. Pendleton's here and Mr. Pendleton, too," it was more than half an hour before Mrs. Richards appeared. As she murmured an apology for her tardiness, Pollyanna noticed her weary air and said contritely, "Perhaps I should have asked if you were too tired to see us. Some days are so hard that by eight o'clock one hasn't much vitality left."

"I'm very glad, indeed, to see you," Mrs. Richards replied in a voice so languid as partly to contradict the cordiality of her words. "But it has been a hard day. When I got home, tonight, instead of finding Mary here and dinner almost ready, there was a note from her saying that an aunt of hers had just died. She had her day off Thursday, as usual, and now again tonight."

Pollyanna said nothing, though she wondered if Mrs. Richards expected sympathy on the lack of consideration shown by the lower classes in not invariably dying on a Thursday.

In the same injured accents Mrs. Richards continued. "When I got here at half past five, I had dinner to prepare, so it's no wonder I'm worn out."

It seemed to Pollyanna that, if Mrs. Richards was exhausted by the labor of preparing a din-

ner for a family of three, either the meal must have been unnecessarily elaborate, or else she was very near the point of collapse when she began. She suggested sympathetically, "Perhaps you had a hard day in town."

"Yes," sighed Mrs. Richards, "very hard."

"Well, after all, you're glad of that, aren't you? That means that business is good, of course."

Mrs. Richards glanced in her husband's direction and, seeing that he seemed absorbed in conversation with Jimmy, answered in a confidential undertone, "We haven't had much trade since Christmas, but we're having a perfectly awful time getting our accounts straightened out. I'm afraid we'll have to hire a bookkeeper. My partner and I thought we could do that ourselves and save expense."

"Probably it will be easier after a while," Pollyanna encouraged her. "I used to make such hard work of keeping my household accounts."

"For the last two or three days I've worked hours and hours over the books," continued Mrs. Richards, "trying to make the dreadful things balance. And then I come home with a headache and have to get dinner. Oh, dear!" All at once her voice lost its confidential tone and became strident and penetrating. "The solution

of our problem is to get rid of this house and go to boarding."

It was apparent to Pollyanna that now she wished her husband to hear. And, whatever Mr. Richard had been talking about, he promptly dropped the subject and took up the gauntlet.

"You see," he said, addressing Pollyanna, "my wife never tried boarding. I have, and I know what it's like."

"It's easy to understand the man's point of view," commented Mrs. Richards with caustic inflection. "All he thinks about is his comfort. It doesn't occur to him that his wife pays for the luxury he enjoys."

"I don't want luxury," objected Mr. Richards, reddening angrily. "I'm a man of simple tastes. But I do object to being cooped up in one or two rooms in a boarding-house."

"Don't you think," began Pollyanna, addressing Mrs. Richards with her most conciliatory air, "that a boarding-house is a rather difficult place for children? There are so many people about, that they have to be repressed most of the time, and it must be very difficult to discipline them properly."

It was so apparent that this was a familiar contention between the husband and wife that she

had an uncomfortable sense of taking sides, and was quite relieved to have Mrs. Richards promptly agree with her.

"Yes, indeed, a boarding-house is impossible for children. I should send Inez to boarding-school. And then, for the summer, there are camps where the girls learn all sorts of things and have the best time in the world."

"But you don't mean—of course you wouldn't send Inez to boarding-school for a long time yet?"

"Why not?"

"She's so little."

"There are plenty of schools," returned Mrs. Richards, "where they take girls as young as Inez." As the zeal of the propagandist mastered her weariness, her air became animated. "I, for one, believe that the earlier such training begins, the better. You see this is an age of specialists, Mrs. Pendleton, and few mothers are specialists."

"They're specially interested in their own children, anyway," Pollyanna remarked, "and that's something."

"Very little. What children need is not sentiment but scientific training. And it cannot start too early."

"I believe it has been proved," Pollyanna said,

"that the death rate among the little babies in institutions where they have the most scientific care, but no cuddling and petting, is much higher than it is even in poor homes, where there is little science, but considerable sentiment. Babies need love if they are to thrive. And I believe the older children need it just as much. I'd rather take my chance with a loving mother, even if she wasn't very wise, than with a trained nurse who had no feeling for a child beyond professional interest."

Mrs. Richards smiled in the superior fashion Pollyanna found vaguely irritating.

"Women have always liked to make themselves believe that motherhood brought a certain wisdom along with it."

"Motherhood doesn't, but love does. It's the greatest teacher of all."

"If it is, I haven't discovered it. I'm more inclined to accept the old saying that love is blind. And then, Mrs. Pendleton," continued Pollyanna's hostess, becoming more vivacious as the discussion warmed, "you are working on the old-fashioned theory that it is the mother's business to make the home the center of the child's world, and to make the child a satisfactory member of the family."

"Old-fashioned," cried Pollyanna, growing ve-

hement in her astonishment. "My goodness! Is there a newer fashion than that?"

"Certainly. We modernists take a broader view. We try to train our children to be useful members of society. Emphasizing the home idea tends to narrowness and selfishness. We are trying to replace it by a social ideal."

It sounded well, but Pollyanna was suspicious.

"I should think that, in the right sort of home, children would get the very sort of training to make them useful in society later. If they are trained at home to be industrious and honest and sympathetic and helpful and all the rest, they're sure to be useful members of society, aren't they?"

"Not at all," said Mrs. Richards pleasantly. "Because, you see, their view-point is all wrong. A child that grows up, feeling that the home is everything and the outside world nothing—"

"Do you really think there is much danger of that, nowadays?" cried Pollyanna, interrupting her hostess in her excitement. "Why, I think the modern mother does well if she can make the home hold its own against all the outside attractions."

"Hear! Hear!" applauded Mr. Richards.

Pollyanna jumped. She became aware that she was speaking with as much vehemence as if

she were addressing a public meeting, that the two men had suspended conversation and were giving their entire attention to the impromptu debate. She saw that Jimmy wore a complacent, all but smug expression, which meant that he was entirely satisfied with the way she was upholding her side of the argument, while Mr. Richards was looking at her with marked approval.

Mrs. Richards was as observing as she, and, although she smiled, there was more than a suggestion of asperity in her voice as she said, "Oh, you home bodies, as you like to call yourselves, certainly know on which side your bread is buttered. You know how to make yourself popular with the other sex."

It seemed to Pollyanna a good time to drop the discussion; but she could not help thinking it a pity that a woman, as advanced as Mrs. Richards believed herself, should not have got beyond the point of suspecting all who differed with her of mercenary motives. And, while Mrs. Richards dangled a number of controversial baits before her, during the next twenty minutes, Pollyanna disregarded them all, and confined her remarks to topics on which there could not possibly be a difference of opinion. And she wondered if Mrs. Richards would consider it an in-

terference with her plans for implanting the social ideal in Inez if she knew the little girl was seeking in the home of a neighbor the happiness she missed in her own.

CHAPTER XII

EAVESDROPPING

While Aunt Polly's growing intimacy with her old schoolmate, Mrs. Aldrich, eased the situation, it by no means, Pollyanna realized, solved the problem which so insistently demanded a solution. As Jimmy said, it was like using hot applications when an operation was needed. Pollyanna and Jimmy had gone over the ground a number of times and Pollyanna did her best not to be over-sensitive, and Jimmy tried his hardest to express his views tactfully and kindly. Fundamentally they were in accord. They agreed that something must be done, but how to do that necessary something, without mortally wounding Aunt Polly, was the perplexing question.

"You see, I've been begging her to sell the house and live with us ever since you came back from France," Pollyanna reminded her husband. "Now the house is sold, I can't very well say I don't want her."

"Of course we're glad to have her here with

us." Jimmy stopped and swallowed, as if the statement were something tough, that went down with difficulty. "The point is that we don't want a general manager."

"Yes, that's it; but it's a dreadfully hard thing to say."

"I'm perfectly ready to say it, dear, but the other night you seemed to think—"

"Oh, yes," shivered Pollyanna, panic-stricken, "I'm the one to say it. But I'll have to wait for an opening, Jimmy, really. You mustn't hurry me."

In Jimmy's opinion an excellent opening soon presented itself. Aunt Polly had accepted the news of the loss of the colonial silver with surprising equanimity, quite agreeing with Pollyanna that it was a mercy nothing worse had happened; but she was continually harking back to that misfortune, and her regret seemed cumulative in its nature, a little keener each time she mentioned the subject. But when she finally suggested that, in order to avert similar disasters, Pollyanna should take the remaining silver upstairs every night, Pollyanna was not favorably impressed.

"You don't mean *all* of it, do you, Aunt Polly?"

"Well, if there's any of your silver you don't care for, that you'd be glad to be relieved of,

you might leave that behind." Aunt Polly softened her satire by a kindly, if superior, smile.

"But it would be such a lot of work."

"Not at all. You can keep a large basket for that particular purpose, and put the silver into it the last thing at night. Then Nancy can get it when she comes downstairs in the morning. Perfectly simple."

"I'm sorry now that we weren't more careful with the tea service," Pollyanna acknowledged. "But that was the only very valuable silver we had. The rest of it can all be replaced, and it seems almost foolish to take so much pains about it."

"Oh, well, if you feel like presenting your silver to the first burglar who comes along," retorted Aunt Polly witheringly, "I've nothing more to say."

A casual listener might have supposed from the concluding sentence that she had dropped the subject for good, but Aunt Polly's "nothing more to say" was always figurative. Daily she returned to the attack, making the same suggestions, bringing forward the same arguments, and finally showing the same displeasure when Pollyanna failed to act upon her recommendation. The result was that, one evening, Jimmy actually carried upstairs a rather heavy market-

basket, containing all the silver, down to the baby's christening mug. Aunt Polly had personally supervised the packing. As Jimmy set the basket in the corner of the bedroom, he cast a rueful glance in Pollyanna's direction, and caught her looking moodily at him. And simultaneously they burst into smothered giggles.

"Seems to me, Pollyanna," Jimmy said, "that this is a pretty good time for your Declaration of Independence. Of course, if people want to make all this fuss over guarding their silver, they've a perfect right to do it. The point is *we* don't, and we've been made to."

Pollyanna agreed that this was the psychological moment.

"I think, perhaps, it's better to make a start on something rather unimportant like this."

"Probably you're right. Then you can tackle it in a light-hearted, free-and-easy fashion, and there won't be any danger of her taking it too seriously."

The usually optimistic Pollyanna only sighed, realizing that Aunt Polly's capacity for taking things seriously was practically unlimited.

"Well, anyway," she said, "I'll be glad when it's over."

It was probably the realization of the task awaiting her on the morrow that troubled Polly-

anna's sleep and resulted in a headache next morning. Jimmy said goodbye to a rather pale, listless wife, and went his way pondering on the instability of human happiness.

"Three months ago everythink was O.K. and now look at us! There's nothing I'd like better than the chance to put things straight to Aunt Polly, but, if I did, she might shake off the dust of her shoes against us, and walk out of the house, and then Pollyanna would never get over it. I hope she won't let herself be brow-beaten today, because, if she is, I'll have the whole thing to do over."

Unexpectedly fate postponed Pollyanna's attempt at self-assertion. As she went about her work, wondering how to introduce the unpleasant subject, the telephone rang. It was Mrs. Aldrich on the wire, and, after a rather protracted conversation, Aunt Polly rang off and came in search of her niece.

"I've asked Matilda out to luncheon," she explained. "She said she wanted me to come to town, but I felt I must make some return for all her hospitality. Nancy had better bake some muffins. Matilda is very fond of muffins. And she dotes on whipped cream, though with her figure she should never touch it."

"I see," said Pollyanna absent-mindedly. The

laundress was behind with her work the previous week, owing to bad weather, and Pollyanna wondered if it would be necessary to ask Nancy to launder some doilies. She had only met Mrs. Aldrich once, and though on that occasion she had impressed her as almost painfully unassuming, Pollyanna realized that her prospective guest was a wealthy woman accustomed to luxury from her cradle; not at all the sort of person one would ask to partake of an impromptu family luncheon. Pollyanna hurried away to consult Nancy, making plans as she went. The children had better have their luncheon in the nursery. They could call it a party and invite Inez and Jiggs, and, if there was enough left of Sunday's chicken, it could be creamed and served in patty shells.

It was a dainty little luncheon of which the three women presently partook. Strictly speaking, two did the eating, while Pollyanna, at the head of the table, chatted and laughed and played with her knife and fork, hoping that no one would notice her unwonted abstinence. Her headache, severe when she woke, had not been helped by the flurry of luncheon preparations, and the sight of actual food, no matter how temptingly prepared, made things worse.

Mrs. Aldrich ate with relish and praised every-

thing extravagantly. Pollyanna realized that, for all her wealth, she was not a person to be afraid of. She noticed, too, with a little amusement, how Mrs. Aldrich hung on Aunt Polly's word, and accepted her decisions as absolute.

At the conclusion of the meal, which Pollyanna had barely tasted, Nancy voiced a sense of injury.

"Miss Pollyanna, either you're losin' your appetite or else you're gettin' tired of my cookin'. Pullin' food to pieces and strewin' it over your plate ain't the same thing as eatin', it ain't, it ain't."

"Nancy, I couldn't eat today, I have such a headache. But everything was perfectly delicious. Mrs. Aldrich said so, over and over."

Nancy's petulance was at once dissipated in concern.

"O'course you couldn't eat, Miss Pollyanna. You're as white as a sheet. You go up to your room and lie down 'til you're feelin' better."

Pollyanna hesitated.

"I'm afraid the children may get noisy in their play and disturb Aunt Polly."

"You leave them children to me, Miss Pollyanna. It ain't a-goin' to hurt nobody if they do make a little mite of noise. An' anyway," she added hastily, seeing by the expression of Polly-

anna's face that this was not altogether reassuring, "I'll see they keep quiet, so make your mind easy an' run along."

After her battle against a sick headache, there was something luxurious in unconditional surrender. Pollyanna lowered the shades and dropped upon the bed with a sigh of relief. The coolness of the pillow against her cheek was like the soothing touch of a mother's hand. She closed her eyes thankfully. Nancy would look after the children, and Aunt Polly and Mrs. Aldrich were happily recalling experiences of their school days, and the task of enlightening Aunt Polly was necessarily postponed. In sixty seconds she was asleep.

When she woke, more than an hour later, her first feeling was one of consternation. Her head was so much better that it was natural to assume that she had slept the greater part of the afternoon, and in that case Mrs. Aldrich would think her a very unmannerly hostess. Pollyanna stood for a moment before the mirror, to smooth her disheveled hair and then hurried out into the hall.

Apparently her nap had not been productive of any serious consequences. The children were playing quietly in the nursery. Mrs. Aldrich and Aunt Polly still talked together, and the

earnestness of their low voices suggested that they were sufficiently entertained without her aid.

Pollyanna lingered a moment by the nursery door, sorely tempted to enter. Reluctantly she decided to leave well enough alone. The children were happy and contented, but they might not be either if, after breaking in on their play, she left them almost immediately, as courtesy to her guest demanded. With a tender smile for the unconscious little group on the other side of the door, Pollyanna turned to go down to the living room. And then, at the top of the stairs, she stopped short, as if overtaken by some such catastrophe as befell Lot's wife.

Aunt Polly was speaking with unwonted vehemence.

"No, Matilda, no," she said. "I appreciate your offer. I appreciate it more than I can say. But my first duty is to Pollyanna."

Up to this point in her history, Pollyanna had never intentionally played eavesdropper. If she had ever overheard conversations not intended for her ears, it was quite accidental. At the risk of disappointing her admirers, it must be confessed that, after a moment of reflection, she seated herself upon the stairs, taking the utmost pains not to make any noise, and gave her

absorbed attention to the conversation in the room below.

There was a moment's silence after Aunt Polly's outburst and then Mrs. Aldrich spoke. Pollyanna was startled to find that, instead of accepting Aunt Polly's assertion as final, she was actually combating it, a most surprising innovation.

"I know, Polly," Mrs. Aldrich quavered. "I understand exactly how you feel. But it really seems to me that I need you more than dear little Mrs. Pendleton does. I hope you don't think I'm terribly selfish."

"Indeed, Matilda, I could hardly think you selfish, after your generous proposal. A selfish woman would be likely to find a selfish use for her money, instead of offering to take an old schoolmate south for the winter."

"Oh, but, Polly," interrupted Mrs. Aldrich, her tone indicating alarm, "You don't understand. That's all part of my selfishness. I should be so much happier with you, you see."

"Thank you, dear," answered Aunt Polly. It was not often that her New England reticence permitted the use of terms of endearment, and this departure from her custom showed how much she was moved.

"If you were alone in the world, as I am, dear

Polly," ventured Mrs. Aldrich, "it would be so wonderful for me. We could go all over the world. I know you've spent considerable time in Europe, but there are so many other places, like Hawaii and Japan and the Holy Land. And, even when I'm in Boston, I get so lonely, living by myself, and servants are so hard to manage nowadays. If you were alone in the world, we'd go wherever you said, and do whatever you pleased, and everything would be perfect. Oh, Polly!"

"It is very sweet of you, Matilda," murmured Aunt Polly, and her voice was not quite steady. "I'll acknowledge to you that to see Japan has been the dream of my life. But—duty is duty."

Mrs. Aldrich sniffed. When she spoke again, her muffled voice groped its way through the folds of her handkerchief.

"I understand, Polly. And, while I am disappointed, I only love and admire you the more for taking that stand."

"Pollyanna is as dear to me as if she were my own child," Aunt Polly continued. "And, in addition to my love for her, I owe her a debt of gratitude. When she came to me I was a very different woman from what I am now, Matilda, selfish and embittered."

"Not selfish," Mrs. Aldrich protested with

some heat. "You mustn't tell me that, Polly, for I shan't believe it."

"You didn't know me. But, if you asked my old neighbors in Beldingsville, they all would tell you what a change Pollyanna's coming made in me. And then, too, I owe to her the greatest happiness of my life. I—it's something I can't talk about, you know, but Thomas and I hadn't spoken for years till that dear child brought us together. Fifteen years of possible happiness were thrown away, Matilda, but those few years we had together are the dearest memory of my life. And if it hadn't been for Pollyanna—"

Aunt Polly broke down and sobbed. Pollyanna guessed from the sounds that Mrs. Aldrich too, was crying. Sitting very quiet at the head of the stairs, she put her own handkerchief to her eyes.

It was some moments before Aunt Polly was composed enough to continue. Then she said resolutely, "She's so young, Matilda."

"Of course—very young."

"And so inexperienced to meet her responsibilities. For the mother of three children has heavy responsibilities, Matilda."

"Yes, but at the same time—"

Aunt Polly interrupted.

"Pollyanna is undeveloped for her age. Some-

times I think she will never be anything but a child. Do you know, Matilda," she lowered her voice discreetly, "I'm not saying this by way of criticism, you understand, but, until I came, the dog was always in the dining room at meal-times."

"Really?" murmured Mrs. Aldrich, her surprise so amiably tempered as to suggest amusement rather than horror. "As you say, that is like a child."

"And now you understand, Matilda," declared Aunt Polly, her air of finality indicating that the discussion was over, "why, while I am grateful from the bottom of my heart for your offer, I must say 'no.' Pollyanna needs me and my first duty—"

Pollyanna suddenly realized that she must act at once, or else be under obligation to accept Aunt Polly's sacrifice everlastingly. She sprang to her feet and all but tumbled down the stairs. The conversation in the living room broke off abruptly, and the women turned in her direction the startled faces of detected conspirators.

Pollyanna was quick to act on her advantage.

"Aunt Polly," she cried, "I've been listening. I've heard every word you said and I love you and thank you, but I'm not going to let you do it."

Aunt Polly looked wildly at Mrs. Aldrich and Mrs. Aldrich looked guiltily at Aunt Polly, but neither spoke. Pollyanna was mistress of the situation.

"I know I'm young," she rushed on, "but I'm improving in that respect every single day. Of course I'm inexperienced, but don't you think, Aunt Polly, dear, that trying things out and seeing your mistakes and then trying over again, is the very best way to get experience? And, anyway, I won't have you giving up your dreams for me, when they're just ready to come true. I'll answer for her, Mrs. Aldrich, and the answer is 'yes.' "

Pollyanna's conscience gave her several twinges during the next half hour, for both Aunt Polly and Mrs. Aldrich assumed that she was making the greatest imaginable sacrifice, and praised her for her unselfishness, until she felt herself the most preposterous of frauds. But, though she blushed furiously each time the misguided women lavished adulation upon her, she did not lose sight of her contention that Aunt Polly would be ready to start south any day Mrs. Aldrich said.

Jimmy chuckled, when he heard the story late that evening.

"Well, the Bible says that there's a time for

everything, and apparently eavesdropping is included."

"That didn't bother me half as much as having them praise me for a sacrifice I didn't make. Oh, how glad I am it came out this way. Don't you see, Jimmy, that, from now on, she's bound to spend most of her time with Mrs. Aldrich, but she'll always have the comfort of thinking that she was such a help to me. And if I'd explained, no matter how kindly I'd done it, she'd have been dreadfully hurt to know that I—that we—I don't know just how to say it."

"Then let me finish for you," suggested Jimmy. "That, in spite of our high regard for her many estimable qualities, we are thankful to see her go. Now don't look as me so reproachfully when you're in such a cheerful frame of mind that you couldn't hide it if you tried."

But there was more to Pollyanna's gladness than she could explain, even to Jimmy. As she sat upon the stairs, playing eavesdropper, she hadn't realized that often, under the misunderstanding and the stupidity and the meddling and the clumsiness by which we blundering human creatures make things hard for one another, love remains loyal, unchanged, and ready for any sacrifice. If there had been any soreness in her heart over Aunt Polly's irritat-

ing interference in her affairs, the events of the day had healed it and left affection and tenderness and gratitude. No wonder Pollyanna was glad.

CHAPTER XII

THE DAY THINGS WENT WRONG

No scientific explanation has ever been propounded of the days when everything goes wrong. Those who hold that the conjunction of certain planets exerts a baleful influence on human destiny have the satisfaction of offering a solution for a universally recognized phenomenon which the great majority of mankind frankly accept as a riddle without an answer.

The catastrophies of this day of ill omen began when the furnace fire went out. As far as one could see, there was no possible reason why it should have gone out on this particular morning more than on any other. Indeed, Jimmy declared that the previous evening he had coaled up lavishly because of the weather bureau's warning that during the night the thermometer would approximate zero. The checks had been left as usual but the fire, which any other night would have done its duty unobtrusively, and been bright and cheerful in the morning, took it on itself to start the program of the day's disasters. Deliberately it went out.

And, as the furnace man, who served a dozen families or more, reached the Pendletons, about half past nine, Jimmy had the pleasure of building the fire, while Pollyanna, wearing galoshes and mittens, in addition to her conventional house costume, took an inventory of the water pipes to make sure none were frozen. Nancy, distracted by the prevalent excitement, had bad luck with her muffins, but this did not matter so much since Jimmy, after finishing with the furnace, was in too great a hurry to spend much time on breakfast.

Nancy always let Jiggs out for his morning run as soon as he came downstairs, and since Aunt Polly's departure he had been called into the house in time to share the sociability of the family breakfast. But, on this ill-starred morning, Jiggs was forgotten, and, when he discovered his master starting for the train, he evidently resolved to take steps against the repetition of such neglect.

For so young a dog Jiggs conducted himself with remarkable discretion. Had he followed his impulses, he would have rushed up to Jimmy and expressed his delight at seeing him again after the long separation of the night. But Jiggs did nothing of the sort. On the contrary he trotted along at a safe distance in the rear, and

fortune favored him, as Jimmy, being in a tremendous hurry, did not once look back. In fact he reached the station just in time to join the line of commuters who were climbing aboard the express. Jiggs came up at the moment when the conductor turned his head, and he hopped up the steps at the end of the line without being noticed by anyone. He entered the coach through whose door he had seen Jimmy disappear, and then the brakeman slammed the door shut, and the train started.

The interior of the railway coach did not impress Jiggs favorably. All the seats were occupied, the male sex predominating, and all the passengers were absorbed in newspapers or other forms of literature. Jiggs was not easily daunted, but the indifference of this unusual crowd, together with the motion of the train, exerted a chilling influence on his blithe spirits.

Jiggs started slowly down the aisle, sniffing audibly as he sought his master. Still no one noticed him, and presently he approached a seat occupied by a young woman reading a magazine. It is possible that she reminded him of his mistress, and, at the prospect of encountering Pollyanna in this unsympathetic environment, Jigg's spirits regained something of their customary buoyancy. Catching sight of a gener-

ous expanse of tan silk stocking, he paused and sniffed inquiringly. And then, his attention attracted by a large and showy buckle on a pump, pleasing in itself, though quite unsuited to a cold winter's day, he tested the glittering object cautiously with his tongue.

The young woman, who is described sufficiently by the statement that she was absorbed in a movie magazine, gradually became aware of something unusual. She looked up from the thrilling pages containing the biography of a screen star, and saw a small but compact bull dog closely examining her foot-gear. Being the sort of young woman she was, she naturally supposed he was looking for the best place on which to demonstrate the effectiveness of the famous bull-dog grip. She uttered a blood-curdling shriek and leaped nimbly up on the seat, drawing her skirts down as far as she possibly could over the tempting silk stockings. Her seat-mate, yielding to the contagion of her panic, addressed Jiggs in peremptory command. "Here you, lie down! Lie down, I say!"

The commuters woke up to the realization that something was happening. Papers were lowered and everyone looked to see the cause of the excitement. Someone exclaimed, "Dog," and a nervous woman with a genius for putting

the worst construction on everything cried, "Mad dog!" and there was a general stir. A pasty-faced man, a few seats back of the young woman whom Jiggs had singled out as the recipient of his attention, wanted to know what the devil the conductor was about.

Quite oblivious to the sensation he was creating, Jiggs focussed his attention on the tan stockings. He was not accustomed to seeing people stand on upholstered seats, and it seemed natural to assume that the motive behind an action so unusual must be playful. Wagging his tail understandingly, Jiggs stood on his hind legs and made a lunge for the end of a dangling ribbon.

The young woman screamed again and this time a score of voices chimed in. Noise always excited Jiggs. He barked lustily, still wagging his tail. And then Jimmy, who had taken the very front seat in the coach, stood up and looked around to learn what was happening.

The scene needed no interpreter; but the sight of the rapidly vibrating tail made it sufficiently clear that the young woman's alarm was groundless. Jimmy stepped into the aisle and strode toward the scene of disturbance. The little brindled dog had a familiar aspect; but, even as he grasped his collar, Jimmy had

no idea that he had any personal responsibility in the case.

"Don't be frightened," he encouraged the young woman, who was verging on hysterics. "He's just a pup and playful."

At the sound of his master's voice Jiggs uttered a yelp of ecstacy and turned his attention to Jimmy, and the woman who had first said, "Mad dog," mistook the nature of Jiggs' demonstrations and cried, "Merciful Heavens, the poor fellow will be killed."

Jimmy, after a moment of incredulity, realized the truth. Jiggs' delight proved his identity without the corroborative testimony of his Christmas collar.

"Jiggs, you scoundrel, how did you get here?"

Jimmy lifted the dog in his arms and Jiggs licked his ear with such vehemence as to knock his hat into the aisle, whining his regret over his inability to express his rapture more plainly. And then the conductor appeared with his familiar, "Tickets, please," which, at the sight of Jimmy and his charge, changed to, "No dogs allowed."

"I know they're not," said Jimmy. "Hadn't you better stop the train and put me off? It would be a great convenience."

As the conductor refused to take this drastic action, Jimmy held Jiggs in his arms until they reached the city, and then, after considerable discussion and some generous tipping, arranged for Jiggs to be cared for in the baggage room. Telephoning Pollyanna in regard to Jiggs' whereabouts took time, and Jimmy went to the office nearly an hour late. But on such a day anything was to be expected.

In the meantime Pollyanna was having troubles of her own. For, while she was busy with the baby, Junior playfully called Sin's attention to the syrup jug. Mistaking it for the cream pitcher, Sin mewed loudly, and Junior, vastly entertained, held it closer, and made a feint of pouring the contents into Sin's saucer. But, when Sin rapturously rubbed against the boy's hand, Junior's fingers relaxed their hold. The contents of the syrup jug deluged Sin, who forthwith started upstairs on the run, leaving a long, long trail of sticky sweetness.

There was only one thing to do with the frantic cat. Despite the chill of the morning, a bath was imperative. And when Pollyanna finished a most difficult task, Sin's altered aspect so agitated Judy that she wept loudly and refused to be comforted.

"I don't like Brovver any more," she sobbed, "'cause he spoiled my nice kitty."

When the excitement had quieted sufficiently for them to remember Jiggs, he failed to respond to their summons, and Pollyanna was just putting on her wraps to go in search of him when the telephone rang. It was Jimmy announcing that Jiggs would spend the day in town and accompany him home on the quarter past five train.

Nancy sighed when Pollyanna told her the news.

"Well, I hope he don't get killed before he gets back. They's days, Miss Pollyanna, that get started wrong, and they stay wrong in spite of everything a body can do. I feel it in my bones that this is that kind of a day, I do, I do."

Pollyanna, mentally reviewing the activities of the morning, took a more hopeful view.

"I believe our ill luck is over for the day, Nancy. And, anyway, we can be glad that the pipes didn't burst."

The next few hours were peaceful enough to confirm Pollyanna's hope that the evil spell put upon the day had been lifted; but, with Junior's return from school, the trouble was renewed. Junior was in an unusually mischievous, not to say naughty, mood. He chased Sin, who,

although restored to his usual sleekness, had not forgotten the events of the morning, and fled precipitately at the sight of his young master. He teased the baby, holding her toys just out of her reach, until she shrieked an enraged if inarticulate protest. As a rule Junior and Judy played together as amicably as two lively children could be expected to do, but on this fateful day they quarreled till at last, after repeated reproofs, Pollyanna resolved on more stringent measures.

"Since my little boy and girl can't play together pleasantly, they will have to be separated. It is a pity when Jiggs never growls at Sin, and Sin never scratches Jiggs, that Junior and Judy quarrel; but, since it is so, Judy will have to play in the nursery and Junior out of doors."

"I want to go out of doors, Muvver," Judy exclaimed, dropping her doll and scrambling to her feet.

Pollyanna was firm.

"No, Judy. If you quarrel in the house, I can't trust you out of doors together, where I can't see and hear. If I see by tomorrow afternoon that you have turned over a new leaf, I may trust you to play together again, but not today."

Feeling much aggrieved, as is the way of

wrong-doers, Junior donned his overcoat and betook himself to the back yard, while Judy wept noisily, and the baby, stirred to sympathy by her sister's tears, also lifted up her voice in lamentation. And then Nancy came up to say that the meat hadn't come, and would Miss Pollyanna please telephone the butcher that she must have it not a minute later than half past three.

It was after another deceitful lull that Pollyanna, deciding that Junior had been out of doors long enough for so cold a day, went to summon him indoors. No Junior was in sight, but, in the next yard, Jack Horner was constructing a snow fort with the assistance of several of the young Hunts.

Catching sight of Pollyanna, Jack called, "You lookin' for Junior, Mrs. Pendleton?"

"Yes, Jack, please tell him it is time for him to come in."

"He ain't here," Jack's tone showed the suppressed elation characteristic of those who know they bring tidings of ill. "He's gone down to Philip Lloyd's house to play with him."

"To Philip's house?" Pollyanna could hardly believe her ears.

"Yes'm. I told him not to," explained Jack virtuously. "I said you wouldn't like it and he said it wasn't none of my business."

Pollyanna withdrew, much annoyed. The children were never allowed to leave the premises without permission, and, while Junior had not been forbidden to play with Philip, accompanying him to his home was a flagrant defiance of authority. Her lips tightening in a fashion that showed the streak of steel under her gentleness, Pollyanna donned her wraps, and made her way to the corner.

Before the house she hesitated, looking up and down the street in search of her missing son. But there was no sign of Junior, and, as Jack Horner's information was all she had to guide her in her search, it seemed the sensible course to put its correctness to the test. Pollyanna mounted the steps quickly and rang the bell.

She had vaguely expected that a servant would answer the summons, but the opening door revealed unmistakably the mistress of the house, and her manner impressed Pollyanna as rather defiant. She was a large woman, still handsome, but probably looking rather older than her years, because of her patent reliance on art to supplement her fading charms. But her makeup, skillfully as it was applied, could not hide the fretful lines about her mouth, and the eyes that stared at Pollyanna were windows through

which discontent and resentment gazed out upon the world.

"Good afternoon," Pollyanna said. "I'm looking for my little boy, Junior Pendleton. He seems to have disappeared and I wonder if he is here."

Apparently Philip's mother found this pleasantness disarming.

"Just come in," she said, "and I'll see." As Pollyanna complied, she continued affectedly. "This is my cook's afternoon out and at present I haven't a maid, so, if the bell is to be answered, I have to do it myself. The servant problem is something fierce."

"I suppose it is," said Pollyanna amiably. "I am very fortunate in having a dear woman who worked for my aunt when I was a little girl."

She was quite aware that Mrs. Lloyd would like to detain her, so as to give a chance passer-by the impression that Mrs. Pendleton had been calling. Pollyanna was less resentful than she might have been, because she found herself extremely sorry for this woman who so plainly was of the temperament always to be dissatisfied with the present, and to hope impossible things for the future.

"Won't you sit down," Mrs. Lloyd urged with a rather pathetic eagerness. "There's a little

boy upstairs with Philip. I didn't know who it was. Philip brings in so many children, but I never interfere. An only child has to get his company where he can, I say."

Pollyanna passed over this obvious untruth as she replied, "Yes, an only child is likely to get lonely."

"I'm sometimes sorry we bought here," Mrs. Lloyd continued. "The neighborhood isn't what I had expected. I don't say they're not nice enough people, but it's not the sort of society I've been used to. Mr. Lloyd and I sometimes talk of selling this place and taking an apartment in town."

"You could do that better than I," said Pollyanna. "Three children are too much for an apartment." She added gently, "That reminds me, I have left two of them at home, and Nancy is busy with dinner, so if you'll see whether Junior is here or not—"

"Philip!" Mrs. Lloyd called in the wheedling voice which invariably impresses the listener as amiability assumed for the occasion, "Philip! Mamma wants you, dear."

There was a sound of hurrying feet overhead and a door opened.

"What do you want?" asked a suspicious voice.

"Philip, what little boy have you up there?"

"Junior Pendleton."

"Well, tell Junior his mamma is down here and she wants him to come home. You'll have to finish your play another afternoon."

The two boys came clattering down the stairs together, Junior unusually subdued, and Philip casting furtive glances at the occupant of the easy chair in the front room. Pollyanna noticed that, as Philip's mother placed her hand on his shoulder, the boy drew back, eyeing her with evident distrust. It was clear that the mother was doing her best to make a favorable impression.

As Pollyanna helped a very silent Junior with his overcoat, Mrs. Lloyd said affably, "Let Junior run in any time, Mrs. Pendleton. The house is big and the noise of children at play doesn't disturb me."

Even though Pollyanna had no intention of accepting the invitation, there was no lack of cordiality in her thanks. The woman, striving to keep up appearances before a stranger, seemed as pathetic a figure as the lonely child.

When Jimmy and Jiggs reached home, Junior and Judy were both in bed, Junior expiating the numerous sins of the day, Judy for meddling with her mother's ink-well contrary to orders,

and ruining a new frock, and a small but rather expensive rug. The baby was fretful and Pollyanna thought she had a tooth on the way. Since the events of the morning Sin was in a highly nervous state, and Jiggs sneezed twice during the evening, awakening his mistress' apprehension that he had contracted distemper when he was away from home.

"I suppose," teased Jimmy, as Pollyanna finished recounting her share of the day's misadventures, "that even today you've found something to be glad about."

"Indeed I have," Pollyanna cried. "I'm glad—gladder—gladdest that Aunt Polly was safe at Palm Beach before this day happened!"

CHAPTER XIV

POLLYANNA PRESCRIBES

JAMIE and Sadie had been abroad about a year. Pollyanna had heard from them both frequently, though as a rule their communications had been confined to picture postcards with a hurried message scrawled beneath Mont Blanc or across the Bay of Naples. Their occasional letters had made no mention of home-coming and when one morning Pollyanna's telephone rang, shortly after Jimmy's departure, she took down the receiver fully prepared to inform her butcher that the beefsteak he had sent her the previous day had not been satisfactory. But it was not the butcher on the wire. Instead a familiar voice said, "Hello, Pollyanna. Do you know who this is?"

Pollyanna started so violently that she almost dropped the receiver. But there was not the least doubt in her mind as to the speaker's identity.

"Sadie!" she shrieked ecstatically, "you darling old globe-trotter! Where in the world are you?"

"Oh, here at Aunt Ruth's."

"Only Boston. I didn't know but you were calling up from London or Tokio. Why didn't you let me know you were coming? Think of all the fun I might have had expecting you."

"Pollyanna," said the distant voice, and all at once it had become very serious, "I want to have a talk with you."

"Well, I should hope so. Do you realize how long it is since we settled down for a good, long talk? I have a million things to tell you, and a million more to ask you. I can hardly wait to hear about your trip."

"Yes, dear, I know." For a moment Pollyanna was vaguely aware of a plaintive cadence in Sadie's voice. "But the fact is I want to ask your advice about something. Are you going to be home this morning?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Well, Aunt Ruth has a full day here"—Pollyanna smiled understandingly as she listened—"and Jamie is going somewhere with Uncle John, and I think I'll run out and have a cosy talk with you, without anybody around."

"Perfect! Tell me the train you'll take, and I'll meet it."

"Nonsense," Sadie laughed. "I'll find you without any trouble. And as for trains, I'm go-

ing to take the first I can get, and the chances are I'll be at your door before you're ready for me."

The playful prophecy was literally fulfilled. What with putting the house in order, and planning the day's meals, and giving the baby a bath, and disciplining Jiggs for burying a dog biscuit in an especially flourishing fern, and putting a clean frock on Judy, and interviewing a book agent who was determined to sell her a twenty-five volume edition of the world's best literature, simplified so as to appeal to childish minds, Pollyanna had become a little disheveled by the time the door bell rang. It was part of Nancy's ritual to change her gingham apron for a white one, and do a little primping before the mirror before answering the doorbell. So, without waiting for the conclusion of this rather protracted ceremony, Pollyanna dashed down the stairs, flung the door wide, and rushed into the arms of an immaculately attired Sadie.

They hugged each other hard and long, stood back a moment looking each other over, and then indulged in a little more hugging. "You look perfectly scrumptious," Pollyanna declared, her cheek pressed close to Sadie's. "A Paris tailor and milliner, I suppose."

"Why, yes—I believe they are."

"Well, come upstairs and take your things off, and inspect my babies. Junior's at kindergarten, so you'll have to wait a little to see him. In the fall he'll start in the first grade. I declare, when I think of it I feel almost elderly. That's Judy peeping out of the nursery door. She's been talking about Aunt Sadie ever since you called up."

Sadie made short work of removing her wraps, and her admiration of the children came as near as was humanly possible to measuring up to Pollyanna's expectations. The baby was adorable, coquetting shamelessly with the stranger, squeezing her long lashes against her cheeks, and then lifting them just enough to admit of casting shy glances in Sadie's direction. In fact, Sadie became so engrossed with the baby that Pollyanna found it necessary to draw her attention to Judy's charms. She flattered herself that she was being a model of discretion, and was somewhat taken aback when presently Judy pulled her sleeve and said in a low voice, "Tell her what I said about the holler-day, Muvver."

"What's that, dear? Mother doesn't understand."

"Don't you 'member? I asked you if we could holler on holler-days. You told Daddy and Daddy laughed."

Pollyanna gasped. She remembered very clearly her amusement over the inquiry propounded by Judy on one of the winter holidays, and she knew she alone was to blame for the complacent air with which Judy waited to hear the recital of this proof of her cleverness.

Pollyanna smoothed the shining curls and smiled ruefully.

"Some other time, dear," she said, and Judy did not insist, though she evidently wondered why her mother should fail to take advantage of so excellent a chance to entertain their visitor.

Not until Sadie had exhausted the superlatives of the English language, and was beginning to fall back on some of the foreign phrases she had acquired during her travels, did Pollyanna recall that Sadie had wished to consult her on some matter of importance.

"Let's go into my bedroom," she suggested. "I need to fix my hair, and I'm going to change my dress for luncheon in your honor. No, Judy," she continued, checking her small daughter, who had attached herself to Sadie, and was evidently prepared to accompany them, "no, darling, you have to stay here to take care of little sister."

Judy's brow, shadowed for a moment by a frustrated purpose, cleared as she realized the honor of her responsibility.

"I'll wead to her," she announced, and, taking a book from the table, she seated herself in a diminutive rocking-chair and began in a high sing-song.

"T'was the nighty 'fore Ch'istmus
An' all froo the house
Not a creature was stirrin'
Not even a mouse."

Pollyanna laughed as Sadie expressed her amazement at such precocity.

"The book she's reading from is 'Little Lord Fauntleroy,' but the text makes no difference to Judy. She can read just as entertaining selections from the dictionary as from anything else. Aunt Polly was terribly shocked one day when she found her reading 'Tom, Tom the piper's son' from the Psalms, held upside down."

"She must have a wonderful memory."

"Yes, she has," agreed Judy's mother proudly. And then she added with a laugh, "But, as far as that goes, Sadie, all children have wonderful memories. When I realize what Junior and Judy have learned in these few short years, I'm lost in admiration."

Pollyanna checked herself with an effort. She had been on the point of enlarging on the fascinating theme, but again she remembered that

Sadie had suggested some especial reason for rushing out from Boston, the first day of her arrival. Poor Sadie had not had a square deal. She had not been allowed to so much as mention her travels, but so far had spent her time admiring Pollyanna's wonderful children, and hearing further proof of their unusual qualities from a witness the hypercritical might regard as prejudiced.

Her face almost stern from the effort of repression, Pollyanna set her teeth over the confidences that crowded to her lips, and waited for Sadie to take her turn. But Sadie seemed in no hurry. She sat for some time, neither moving nor speaking, her gaze bent on the rug. But when, at last, she spoke, she discharged her secret, as if she had been firing a rifle. "Pollyanna, I'm going to be a mother."

Pollyanna dropped her brush and spun about.

"Oh, Sadie," she cried joyously, "how glad I am. How happy you and Jamie must be!" And then she stopped with a sense of recoil, as if she had been running in the dark and had come up hard against a stone wall. "Why, Sadie?" she probed. "What is it? Is anything wrong?"

Sadie smiled faintly.

"No—nothing's wrong—exactly."

"What do you mean by that? Aren't you well?"

"Yes, indeed. I'm all right. But, Pollyanna, don't you see?" Sadie's voice had become almost fretful. "Don't you see it's different with me from what it is with many women?"

"No, I don't see at all."

"Well—it's Jamie."

"Do you mean," stammered Pollyanna horrified, "that he's not glad?"

"Oh, he seems very pleased. But I'm afraid he doesn't realize what it's going to mean to him. In the years since we've been married Jamie has been my first consideration. I've hardly had a thought," said Sadie, speaking in a low voice, yet with a curious suggestion of passion, "except what was for Jamie's comfort and convenience and happiness. And now things will have to be different."

"I should think so," Pollyanna agreed. And then she added, "After all, isn't it time Jamie grew up?"

"Grew up!" Sadie's air of rigid self-control was replaced by indignant protest. "Why, I don't know what you mean. If you don't think Jamie is as much a man as Jimmy or anybody else—"

Pollyanna interrupted this wifely defense by putting her arm about Sadie's shoulders and giving her an affectionate squeeze.

"I was devoted to Jamie, my dear, before you ever saw him. You don't need to tell me that he's fine. But I do say that he's never really grown up, and it's largely your fault. Now, listen," she insisted, as Sadie showed a disposition to interrupt. "It's the natural thing for a child to feel itself the center of the universe. The baby, bless her heart, takes it for granted that she comes first, and, if she doesn't get instant attention, she makes a fuss. Now that's the child of it, and that's the attitude you've encouraged in Jamie."

"Pollyanna, that's absurd. It's only that Jamie has needed me more than most husbands need their wives. It's partly because of his lameness, but not altogether."

Ignoring Sadie's interruption as if she had not spoken, Pollyanna continued:

"I noticed the change in Judy as soon as the baby was born. Don't you see, you can't feel yourself the center of everything when there's somebody smaller and frailer and more helpless than yourself to think and plan for. Junior, with his two baby sisters, is getting to be a real little

man. And I tell you, it's what Jamie needs. You can thank your lucky star the baby is coming in time. Ten years more of what you've been giving him might have spoiled him; but, as yet, it's not too late for him to change."

She found it necessary to pause for breath, and Sadie seized this opportunity.

"Pollyanna," she objected "there's something you're not taking into account. Jamie is—well, I won't say he is a genius, though that has been said by a number of people. But he has the sensitiveness of an artist. He is temperamental and you can't judge temperamental people as you do nice, wholesome, matter-of-fact fellows like—well, like Jimmy."

"Seems to me," retorted Pollyanna, "that all the temperamental people I've ever known were simply childish. They were changeable, just as children are, and gave in to their moods, just as children do, instead of trying to control them. But artists have an advantage over the rest of us. They give the world so much pleasure that it doesn't ask for anything else. That's why so many of them are Peter Pans."

Sadie started what seemed a rather indignant expostulation, choked, stopped short, put her handkerchief to her eyes, and finally found

herself crying against Pollyanna's shoulder.

"Then—then you think it will be all right?" she sobbed.

"The rightest thing that ever happened. Listen, Sadie; don't you remember, when we went camping that summer you spent in Beldingsville so long ago, I wanted to keep Jamie from helping carry boxes and do the other hard things. And you showed me what a mistake I was making, and that Jamie was a lot happier when he was helping like the rest of us."

"Yes," whispered Sadie in a muffled voice, "I remember."

"Well, I'm giving you back the lesson you gave me. Let Jamie take his share of the hard things, as other fathers do. Don't shield him and spare him and make a child of him. Let him do his part as a man and a father, and you and he are both going to be happier than you've ever been."

When Sadie again lifted her face, it was glowing.

"Oh, Pollyanna," she burst out, "you've helped me so much. I envied you, today, when I saw you with your children. I was tempted to wish that the man I married, instead of being so gifted, was just a plain, ordinary good fellow like—well, like thousands and thousands.

But if you think we can be happy in spite of everything—"

Pollyanna's reassurance was a little slow in coming. She suspected that Sadie's "plain, ordinary good fellow" stood in Sadie's thoughts for Jimmy and, indeed, that Jimmy's name had been on the tip of her tongue until, from motives of policy, she had offered this thinly disguised substitute. For a moment Pollyanna was strongly tempted to explain that Jimmy was quite as wonderful, in his way, as the most talented of Jamie's craft, to say nothing of Jamie himself. And then she forgot her vague resentment at the sight of Sadie's red eyes, a smile breaking through, like a golden sunset after a wet day. The two young women sat with their arms about each other, discussing subjects so absorbing that they were quite unaware of the flight of time, and the call to luncheon finally found Pollyanna with her hair still hanging over her shoulders.

When Pollyanna told Jimmy of the counsel she had given, Jimmy chuckled.

"That's all right," he said. "But, if Sadie were as well acquainted with you as I am, she'd know you think a baby is the best cure for all husbands and wives, no matter what ails them. Your invariable prescription is, 'One small baby. Re-

peat dose if necessary. P. Pendleton, M.D.'"

Pollyanna looked at him defiantly.

"I don't care," she said. "I do think it's almost a panacea. If a baby doesn't cure one of being selfish and inconsiderate and silly and frivolous, I don't know what will. There are some people who are hopeless cases, I suppose; but, if there's a bit of good in anybody, a baby will find it. As far as Jamie is concerned, it's going to be the making of him, that is, if Sadie doesn't insist on being father and mother and leaving him nothing to do. That's the real danger."

"In that case," Jimmy suggested, "we'll hope for twins."

CHAPTER XV

JAMIE STARTS SOMETHING

JAMIE and Sadie came out to dinner the Saturday following Sadie's preliminary visit, and Pollyanna took a great deal of pains to prepare the children's minds for the sight of Jamie on crutches. They had both seen him a year and a half before; but Judy had, of course, no recollection of his visit, and even Junior's memory was hazy. Pollyanna, after awakening their interest in the boy in the wheeled chair, who had been on such friendly terms with the birds and squirrels, reached the main point of her narrative, that the aforesaid boy had been promoted from a wheeled chair to crutches.

"You see, Uncle Jamie writes books that people love to read, just as I used to love to listen to his stories when I was a little girl. But he can't walk and run as Daddy does. He doesn't have to ride around in a wheeled chair, the way he did when I first knew him; but he has to use crutches. And, when people are lame, we never notice the crutches for fear of hurting their feelings, you know."

Junior was very much interested.

"Onct I saw a boy walking on crutches, an' he was awful high, higher'n Daddy, higher'n the church, I guess."

"I believe you're thinking of stilts, Junior, instead of crutches. Boys walk on stilts for fun, so that they will look very tall, and its doesn't matter if you do laugh, because they're trying to be funny. But, if people use crutches, it's because they have to, and we never notice them."

She had a bad half minute the next day when Jamie and Sadie arrived. The two children stood peering from the window with a fixity of attention Pollyanna knew was not due to interest in either of her approaching guests. Their gaze was riveted on the polished crutches, by whose aid Jamie was swinging himself up the steps. Pollyanna wondered if she had made a mistake in trying to prepare them for the unusual spectacle.

"Junior!" she called warningly.

Junior started and flushed. Then, realizing that he was not the only transgressor, he seized his sister's arm and pinched it violently. Judy shrieked.

"She was looking, Mother, at the thing you said for us not to notice," Junior defended himself, and Pollyanna, hurrying to open the door,

had only time to hiss a warning, "Hush, children!"

Jimmy, who came home early on Saturday afternoons, rushed downstairs at the sound of voices in the hall, and there was much handshaking and kissing, while everybody talked at once. It was not until they were seated in the living room, Jamie's crutches leaning up against his chair, that Pollyanna discovered Junior staring at the chandelier. In his determination not to embarrass his mother's guest by noticing the badges of his disability, Junior had turned his gaze in the only direction he considered safe.

Pollyanna was just concocting an errand to the kitchen which should distract his thoughts from the delicate subject when Jimmy noticed his singular attitude.

"What are you looking at, old son?"

"Nothing," said Junior patiently.

"Well, you're looking at it pretty hard, aren't you?"

"Yes, Daddy."

"Jimmy," interposed Pollyanna hastily, "I hear the baby." She had previously warned her husband that, whenever Jamie was in the house, she should call on him to do rather more than his share of caring for the children, in order to impress the prospective father with his forth-

coming responsibilities. "Her clean dress is hanging just beside the crib," she continued, "and you'd better put on her little white shoes." Then, as Jimmy took himself off, smiling broadly at some joke apparent only to himself, Pollyanna turned to Junior. "I think I hear Jiggs whining, dear. You may call him into the house, but wipe his feet carefully before you let him in on the rugs."

Junior dropped his eyes from the ceiling, and his descending gaze caught some spectacle apparently as arresting as the head of Medusa. He sat looking quite as intently as he had at the chandelier, but now the blankness of his stare had been replaced by an expression of dull horror. Pollyanna's eyes followed his, and for an instant she shared his apprehension.

Judy was hovering around the crutches as if they had been lighted candles and she a little white moth. Her face shone with a charming mixture of mischief and daring. Her extended hand touched the polished wood, then stroked it caressingly. And, when Jamie turned his head to see what was engrossing Junior's attention, she looked straight into his eyes with a breath-taking smile.

"Pretty crutches," she said, her enunciation painfully distinct.

Pollyanna had too often been given convincing proof of Jamie's unreasonable sensitiveness to feel at all sure how he would take this; but, to her enormous relief, she perceived that Judy's winsomeness was more than a match for her lack of tact. Jamie picked her up and set her on his knee, while Judy, true daughter of Eve, exerted all her wiles to make a conquest of this stranger.

"So you like the crutches, do you?" said Jamie. "And how do you like the fellow that uses them?"

Judy stroked his cheek with her plump little hand. "You're my nice Uncle Jamie," she cooed.

Jamie was clearly enchanted.

"Pollyanna," he challenged his hostess, "you don't pretend that this is your child?"

"I'd like to see anyone else lay claim to her," bristled Judy's mother.

"The evidence is all against you. You were a darling little girl, a child angel—"

"Jamie!" Pollyanna protested indignantly, "I was nothing of the sort."

"Well, anyway, you were a dear, as some of us will always remember. But there wasn't a bit of coquetry in your nature, and this little fairy is all coquette."

Judy had listened raptly.

"Am I a fairy?" she questioned with a coy, upward glance.

"You have all the ear-marks, it seems to me."

Judy hastily felt of her little pink ears.

"Where are they, Uncle Jamie?"

Junior was looking disturbed.

"Judy can't be a fairy," he objected, "'cause she's my little sister."

"Oh, well, you never can tell," teased Jamie. "Sometimes the fairies steal a human baby and put a fairy baby in its place. It looks to me as if that very thing happened in this case."

Jimmy arrived with the baby, and this put a stop to Jamie's romancing, rather to Pollyanna's relief. Judy was looking altogether too complacent over this fanciful explanation of her origin, while Junior's countenance betrayed the keenest anxiety. The baby, radiant and rosy after her nap, immaculate in a clean frock and with her best company smile, became the center of attention for the time being. And even Pollyanna could not guess that the incident was far from being closed.

Inez Richards had favored the Hunts with her company to luncheon, and, finding the meal somewhat informal and scrappy for her taste,

she inquired casually, "Why don't you have nice things to eat, like Junior and Judy do?"

"You don't have to eat at our house if you don't like what we've got," Cornelia informed her witheringly.

"You asked yourself," added Arthur, backing up his sister.

"You can play with Junior Pendleton all the time, if you want to. We don't care," taunted Elizabeth.

Inez would have felt herself a match for any of them singly, but even her stout courage quailed before a united family. "I guess my mother'd rather I played with Junior," she informed her late hosts, "'cause he's so much more politer." And with great dignity she retired under fire, the five Hunts joining in jeering cries.

Inez' arrival at the Pendleton home proved the signal for breaking up the group in the living room. Pollyanna checked the newcomer, as she was about to remove her coat, and suggested that it would be better for Junior and Judy to accompany her to the back yard. Jimmy carried Jamie off upstairs, presumably for a confidential chat. Pollyanna and Sadie had entered on an interesting discussion regarding the wardrobe which a newcomer on this planet had a right to

expect, when Pollyanna spied a familiar figure ascending the steps.

"Why, there's Inez' mother," she exclaimed, jumping to her feet. "She's come to see what Inez is doing, I suppose."

The supposition did little credit to Pollyanna's intelligence, as never, in the time she had had the pleasure of Mrs. Richards' acquaintance, had she known her to manifest the least interest in the occupation Inez found for her leisure time.

And, indeed, Mrs. Richards, when admitted, made no reference whatever to Inez, but, catching sight of Sadie in the adjoining room murmured irresolutely, "I see you have company. I didn't know—"

"Come right in," urged Pollyanna hospitably. "This is an old friend and I'm glad to have you meet her." And then, as Sadie rose, the baby still in her arms, Pollyanna briefly performed the ceremony of introduction. "Mrs. Carew, Mrs. Richards. This is one of my new neighbors, Sadie."

Both women, murmuring the conventional expressions of pleasure, extended their hands. But, as their fingers met, each started and stared; their mechanical smiles disappeared, wiped out by some strong emotion.

"Why—" gasped Mrs. Richards, "it's—you."

And Sadie, Pollyanna realized, was mumbling something equally incoherent.

"Why, do you really know each other?" she cried, looking from Mrs. Richards' blank face to Sadie's flushed one. "Why, isn't that nice. I didn't have the least idea—" And then she stopped, finding that she, too, was growing incoherent, under the disturbing impression that the previous acquaintance of her two friends had not been altogether agreeable.

Sadie was the first to speak. "Yes, I met Mrs. Richards yesterday," she said with a nervous smile. "Aunt Ruth had some business at the Novelty Gift Shop, and we stopped there on our way to the concert."

"I'm very sorry Mrs. Pendleton was annoyed," remarked Mrs. Richards coldly. Then she turned to Pollyanna with a start. "'Pendleton.' I never thought that her name was the same as yours. Are you related?"

"Oh, don't wait to have the family tangle straightened before you sit down," laughed Pollyanna, pulling forward a rocking chair. "Mr. Pendleton is my husband's adopted father, and Mrs. Pendleton—"

She hesitated and looked at Sadie, who relieved her by going on with the story:

"Mrs. Pendleton is my husband's aunt, but he

was left an orphan when he was very young, and she is all the mother he has ever known."

"I'm very sorry," Mrs. Richards said again, "that Mrs. Pendleton was annoyed over that bill." She had seated herself by now, and, as her body relaxed, her voice became less icy. "It is so hard to keep accounts correctly," she sighed.

"The young woman you have with you," began Sadie hesitatingly, "I don't know whether she's your clerk or your partner—"

"Oh, my partner, Ruth Rossiter. She's a society girl, but she tired of the inanities of the social whirl," explained Mrs. Richards, "and wanted to do something really worth while."

"She looks very young. I don't suppose she's had any business experience."

"No-o, no business experience. Neither have I, for that matter. I suppose mistakes are bound to happen under such circumstances."

Guessing that the subject was a sore one, from the persistency with which Mrs. Richards returned to it, Pollyanna gave a humorous account of an experience with a collector who had presented a bill for over forty-five dollars for taxi-hire.

"As long as neither Jimmy nor I ever thought of taking a taxi in those days," laughed Polly-

anna, "it was a little bit funny, though I got dreadfully excited about it. The collector was so persistent."

And then she changed the subject by asking Mrs. Richards what the dentist said about that tooth that had been giving Inez so much trouble. But it appeared that this was the first Mrs. Richards had heard of the troublesome tooth, so the dentist had not been given a chance to express an opinion.

In the course of half an hour Mrs. Richards' demeanor had thawed perceptibly, and Polly-anna was beginning to hope that the agreeable ending to the call might atone for the rather unpleasant introduction, when Junior appeared with a grievance.

"Mother, Inez wants to boss everything. She—"

"Hush, Junior. Don't you see that Mother has a caller? Come and speak to Mrs. Richards."

With an expression befitting a victim of the Inquisition approaching the torture chamber, Junior advanced to Mrs. Richards and offered his hand. The social amenities disposed of, he returned to his lament.

"Mother, if we don't let Inez have her way 'bout everything, she starts calling names—"

"Junior, if you and Judy cannot play happily

out of doors, come into the house and play in the nursery."

"It's time for Inez to go home," said Mrs. Richards. "Please tell her, Junior, that her mother is here and waiting for her."

Pollyanna congratulated herself when she said goodbye to Sadie, without again referring to the unfortunate misunderstanding at the Gift Shop.

Sadie appeared to find Mrs. Richards' departure a relief.

"Your friend seems to hold me responsible for what happened yesterday, and I was only the innocent bystander. I didn't have a thing to do with it, except to be present and I wished myself a hundred miles away."

"Was it as bad as all that?"

"Well, Aunt Ruth was vexed. You see, when the shop started they invited her to open an account there. One of her friends interested her in the undertaking and she bought quite a little at the Gift Shop and she says that every month the bill has been wrong, and that this month's bill has all the items she had refused to pay, because they didn't belong to her. So she went in and uttered some home truths which Mrs. Richards and her partner didn't enjoy a bit better than I did, to judge from their expressions."

"Mrs. Richards told me that their bookkeep-

ing bothered them awfully," said Pollyanna, her voice betraying sympathy. "I'm sure it was just a mistake."

"Why, of course. You see, Pollyanna, some of the rich girls who are rushing into business nowadays have never really distinguished a nickel and a five dollar bill. I mean, they'd spend one with as little thought as they'd spend the other. Its pretty hard for people of that sort to run anything on a business basis, and keep track of every penny. I think Miss Rossiter thought it rather beneath Aunt Ruth's dignity to make a fuss over a mere trifle of thirty dollars! I prophesy that venture will come to grief before many moons."

"I'd hate to say that I'd be glad if it did," commented Pollyanna, after a moment, "because it would be a terrible disappointment to Mrs. Richards. But, when I think how much that poor child needs her mother, and how much the poor mother needs her child, I—well, if they get what they both need, why shouldn't I be glad about it?"

CHAPTER XVI

THE MYSTERY BABY

It was perhaps with the hope of counteracting the depressing effect of Mrs. Richards' call that, on the occasion of Sadie's next visit, Pollyanna resolved on an impromptu tea.

"I have such lovely neighbors," she told Sadie, "I want you to know them. You'll be back and forth so often the next few years that it will be nice for you to feel acquainted with everyone."

Taking Sadie's silence for consent, Pollyanna went briskly ahead issuing her invitations. Her method was informal. Catching sight of Mrs. McGill at her bedroom window, Pollyanna threw up her own window, and by gestures indicated that she had something of importance to communicate. Mrs. McGill, instantly understanding, put out her head and Pollyanna called to her, "Can't you come over this afternoon to meet a friend of mine?"

"Charmed. What time?"

"Oh, about three o'clock."

Mrs. McGill smiled, nodded, and closed the window. And then Mrs. Hunt, coming into the back yard to hang some clothes on the line, received an invitation which she as promptly received. Pollyanna caught sight of Mrs. Warner as she passed the house on her way to market. The others were invited over the telephone, with the exception of Mrs. Richards. As it was impossible to get a response from her phone, after repeated ringings, Pollyanna sent Junior over with a note, inviting her to drop in to have a cup of tea with Mrs. Carew and some of the neighbors, provided she reached home in time.

While Pollyanna was telephoning, Sadie busied herself with one of those tiny garments into whose making goes so much of hope and tenderness. Absorbed in her own thoughts she did not notice that Judy had come up beside her and was viewing her work with interest, not unmixed with suspicion. Sadie was recalled from the dream world to this by the question, "What for are you making a baby dwess?"

Sadie gave a little start, conquered an impulse to hide the tell-tale garment, and smiled into the puzzled face raised to hers. Like many conscientious people Sadie considered children fair game. She replied gaily, "I'm thinking of stealing your baby."

"Muvver wouldn't let you."

"But she has you and Junior. It's not fair for her to have three children when I haven't any."

"Maybe," hesitated Judy, frowning as she struggled with the weighty problem, "maybe the fairies will steal you one."

"I'm tired of waiting for the fairies. I'm going to steal one for myself."

Judy backed away, her face shadowed by resentment, and Sadie, with the all but universal inability to take a child's deepest emotions seriously, laughed and went on with her sewing.

Shortly after three Pollyanna's living room presented an unusually animated appearance. Pollyanna's neighbors had been as informal as she. Most of them had come without their hats, and practically all of them had brought their sewing. Now all were talking at the same time, the most convincing proof that a feminine assemblage is enjoying itself.

The children were not in evidence, having been sent out of doors to play, Judy leaving most reluctantly.

"I want to stay'n' hear 'em talk 'bout their husbands," she had whispered in her mother's ear.

Nancy had the baby up in the nursery. But, though absent in body, the children still dom-

inated the situation. It was not long before the conversation had turned to those problems of especial interest to mothers of families.

"Sounds like an unofficial meeting of the Mothers' Club," Mrs. McGill remarked to Sadie in a momentary lull. "I'm out of it, for I haven't children. Have you?"

"No," said Sadie and blushed in a way which made every woman present regard her with kindly interest. And then Mrs. Redding, perhaps to divert attention from Sadie's flaming cheeks, exclaimed, "I wish everyone here could have attended a lecture I heard in the city yesterday. Every mother should hear it."

"Can't you give us the gist of it?" asked Pollyanna, all interest.

Mrs. Redding did not seem to find this easy. Rather haltingly she explained that it was not safe to interfere with children's doing as they pleased. If they still wished to do the forbidden thing, it became a suppressed desire, and ended in becoming a complex.

"And it's very dangerous," explained Mrs. Redding, evidently glad to reach a conclusion, "for, as near as I could make out, if a thing's a complex, you simply have to do it."

A rather depressed pause followed this sweeping statement.

"I declare," cried Mrs. Wilkins at length, "it's terrible how much a mother needs to know nowadays."

Mrs. Warner expressed her agreement.

"A mother's sense of responsibility is perfectly crushing—that is, if she takes motherhood seriously. Sometimes, when I look at my Jack, I wonder how I ever had the courage."

"Some women never seem to think of it that way," remarked a pretty little blonde, whose bobbed hair gave her such a juvenile aspect that the maturity of her sentiments was almost startling. "Beyond seeing that their children have enough to eat and wear, they haven't any feeling of responsibility."

"It seems to me," said Mrs. Hamilton gravely, "that a woman without a very strong sense of duty isn't fit to be a mother."

There was a corroborative murmur and then Pollyanna spoke.

"Don't you think," she suggested, "that gladness is about as important?"

"Gladness?" repeated Mrs. Hamilton with an interrogative accent. "Why, what do you mean?"

"A woman might be very well posted on all the new theories of child training," explained Pollyanna, "and she might have developed her sense of duty and her sense of responsibility

enormously, but, if she hadn't learned to get fun out of being a mother, I think she'd be a failure."

There was a little stir in the room.

"But if one is worn out with work and anxiety," suggested Mrs. Wilkins querulously, "how is one to be glad?"

"Women of our class ought not to be worn out with work, except in some crisis like sickness. I consider that my first job," explained Pollyanna, "is to be a happy mother. Then I try to be as good a housekeeper as possible, without sacrificing the more important things."

"I can assure you that Mrs. Pendleton lives up to her theories," said Mrs. McGill. "I'm going to tell them about Christmas morning, my dear. Oh, yes, I am." And then, despite Pollyanna's protest, she told the story of the loss of Pollyanna's most cherished possession. "Every other woman in the room under the same circumstances," declared Mrs. McGill, "would have been in tears. And the first words Mrs. Pendleton said were, 'I'm glad.' "

"We all envy Mrs. Pendleton her sunny nature," said Mrs. Warner, glancing affectionately in the direction of her hostess. "I'd give anything if I had been born with a cheerful disposition."

"Now I wonder if she was simply born that

way," mused Mrs. McGill. "Of course I hope so, for that relieves me of all responsibility. But I believe Mrs. Pendleton lays it to a game she has played ever since she was a little girl."

"A game!" repeated Mrs. Hunt. "That sounds interesting."

"I'm sure it wasn't bridge," laughed Mrs. Warner, to whom Pollyanna had outlined her strenuous week as Aunt Ruth's guest.

"You'd better tell them the story, Mrs. Pendleton," suggested Mrs. McGill. "Or, if you're too modest, I'll do it, though it won't be done as well."

As a matter of fact, the story of the little crutches in the missionary barrel lost nothing in Mrs. McGill's telling. It was clear that everybody present was interested, even though inclined to regard the Glad Game as an ideal impossible of realization.

"I can see how it would interest a child," said Mrs. Hamilton, "but, of course, as one grows older—"

Although she had left her sentence unfinished, her meaning was plain, and Pollyanna promptly took up the gauntlet in defense of her game.

"There's always something to be glad about in everything. I've never found an exception and

the Glad Game is an old game now, you know."

"And you still play it?" someone asked incredulously.

Pollyanna smiled sweetly in the questioner's direction.

"I remember once telling Aunt Ruth that if I had no more hard things in my life than she did, I shouldn't know how to play the game myself. And that's the difficulty with me just now. There's so much happiness I don't have to hunt for a reason to be glad."

She gave a little start as she finished and turned quickly. Someone asked a question, but it was evident that she did not hear it. She was plainly listening to a sound outside the room, and her expressive face showed an incredulity that deepened to amazement.

"The baby's waked up, hasn't she?" remarked Sadie, glancing with wonder at Pollyanna's absorbed face.

Pollyanna turned toward her.

"It does sound as if it were in this house, doesn't it?" she appealed. "But it can't be. It's a much younger child than my baby."

The wailing, which all now heard distinctly, became louder. The door of the nursery opened and Nancy crossed the upper hall. They heard

her speak soothingly, "There, there, dearie! Does it want its mamma, bless its heart!"

Pollyanna ran to the foot of the stairs.

"What is it, Nancy!" she cried, a curious tension in her voice.

"Nothing, Miss Pollyanna. The little dear has had its nap out. I'll bring it down."

Almost as she finished, Nancy appeared at the head of the stairs, a baby in her arms. It was a child perhaps six months old, dressed for out-of-doors in white knitted garments which contrasted strikingly with the red, angry little face. The baby was crying vociferously, its eyes squeezed tightly shut, and, as Nancy came smiling down the stairs, Pollyanna fell back a step and stood speechless, staring at the apparition.

"I believe it knows it's in a strange house, Miss Pollyanna," Nancy said. "I guess it'll feel better if it gets a sight of its mamma."

She turned expectantly toward the group in the living room and the silent women gave back her gaze blankly.

"Nancy," Pollyanna quavered, finding her voice at last. "Where did that baby come from?"

Nancy closed her eyes tightly for a moment and, when they again opened, they were frightened.

"Ma'am?" she faltered.

"I said, where did the baby come from?"

"Why, Miss Pollyanna, some of the ladies brought it, didn't they? I didn't even know t'was in the house till I heard it a-cryin'. It was a-lyin' on Judy's bed, kickin' and squirmin' and screamin', with its little face as red as a red, red apple."

Again she turned appealingly to the group in the living room, as if imploring someone to claim her burden. As no one seemed disposed to assume the responsibility of the screaming infant, Nancy closed her eyes again, and swayed slightly, as if ready to fall. Pollyanna rushed to the rescue, snatched the baby from Nancy's limp arms, and held the small insurgent against her shoulder soothingly, till its cries changed to a tranquil cooing. The excited women gathered about, offering innumerable suggestions, but no one was able to identify the baby.

"I suppose the back door's unlocked," Pollyanna said, struggling to rally her wits sufficiently to formulate a theory.

"Why, yes, ma'am. The children are out playing."

"I wonder," mused Pollyanna distractedly, "if the children could have had anything to do with this. Will you please call them, Nancy?"

"Junior is over playing with Jack," said Mrs.

Warner. "I'll call him while Nancy brings Judy."

Junior was the first to arrive, owing to the fact that Nancy, after starting on her errand, came back breathless to announce that there was a baby carriage in the back yard.

"It's run right close to the house, Miss Pollyanna, and it's got a little fur rug an' a pillow-case all embroidery. If this ain't for all the world like the witch stories my old grandmother used to tell me—"

Mrs. Warner had purposely avoided giving Junior any explanation of his urgent summons home, and, when he entered the house, and saw his mother with a strange baby in her arms, he at once leaped to a not unnatural conclusion.

"Why, mother," he gasped ecstatically, "is it—is it a girl or a boy?"

"Junior," said Pollyanna, though his face had practically answered her question before it was put, "do you know how this baby got here?"

Junior came closer, looking at her confidentially.

"Some folks say a queer bird brings 'em," he explained. "A bird with awful long legs. But I don't believe it myself."

It was clear that there was no information to be secured from Junior, and, when Nancy ap-

peared with Judy, the latter wearing an expression of cherubic innocence, it seemed preposterous to connect her with the mystery. But, though she looked sharply at the woolly bundle in her mother's arms, she made no remark, and the omission struck Pollyanna as suspicious.

"Judy dear, do you know how that baby came here."

"I guess," piped Judy while they all stood breathless, "I guess the fairies stealed it."

Pollyanna recalled Jamie's fanciful talk of the week before and sighed as she continued her catechism.

"Put on your thinking cap and tell Mother all about it."

"I guess," replied Judy in a still higher key, "that the fairies stealed it for Aunt Sadie."

In spite of the tension, a smothered laugh went the rounds, checked as Sadie uttered a shocked exclamation.

"Oh, Pollyanna, I wonder if I'm to blame for this."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"She saw me at work on some baby things and asked me about them. And I—well, I told her I was thinking of stealing your baby."

"*This* is a nice baby, Aunt Sadie," suggested Judy, pointing to the wool-clad infant. "You

said you—you couldn't wait, so the fairies—they hurried up."

Pollyanna was convinced that the culprit was before her. She handed the baby over to the nearest woman, and took Judy's hand.

"Come upstairs with Mother, Judy," she said. "We're going to have a little talk."

As Judy mounted the stairs, her voice floated back to the group below. "Ain't Aunt Sadie glad the fairies stealed her such a nice baby?"

It took twenty minutes of questioning before Judy admitted that she herself was the fairy responsible for the theft of the baby. It is a question whether an imaginative child is always able to distinguish between its fancies and realities. During Pollyanna's cross-examination there were times when Judy seemed fully to believe her first preposterous story. But, at last, she acknowledged finding a baby-carriage with a baby in it. "And it didn't have any muvver or any daddy or any Nancy or anybody," Judy explained dramatically. "The fairies stealed it for Aunt Sadie."

"Who helped to bring it here?" Pollyanna asked, but apparently Judy had had no accomplice. Had it not been for indisputable evidence in the shape of the baby's presence, Pollyanna would have been inclined to think her story

another imaginative flight. On finding the unattached carriage, she had serenely pushed it home, and apparently no one had been sufficiently impressed by the spectacle of a child, hardly more than a baby herself, in charge of an infant a few months old, to make any inquiries. Junior was not in sight when Judy reached home, and Nancy was in the nursery, so that Judy, unquestioned, carried the sleeping baby up the back stairs—Pollyanna shuddered as she listened—and deposited her on her own bed.

Pollyanna was sure at last that she had the correct story.

"Now we will go right to the place where you found the baby carriage," she said. "Perhaps the poor mother is feeling as bad this very minute as we would feel if our baby disappeared."

"Aunt Sadie—" Judy began, and, though she got no further, her mother understood.

"Aunt Sadie was only joking when she talked about stealing our baby. She wouldn't think of doing such a wicked thing. Now, Mother will put on her coat and hat, for we must hurry."

Downstairs Pollyanna's guests were waiting eagerly for her report, but, when she gave it, they looked incredulous.

"It doesn't seem possible," declared Mrs. McGill, scrutinizing the small culprit, "unless she

really did have assistance from the little people."

"Children are equal to a great many things we think impossible," said Pollyanna, taking the baby from Mrs. Hunt's arms. "I hope to be back very soon and give you all that cup of tea I promised. If I don't come, Nancy—"

"Oh, nonsense," cried Mrs. McGill. "Don't worry about our tea. But don't you think, my dear, that we had better telephone to the police station before you start. When those responsible for the baby find it has disappeared, they will notify the police immediately."

Pollyanna approved the suggestion, and Mrs. McGill did the telephoning. But no case of kidnapping had been reported at the police station, though the official in charge took Pollyanna's address for future reference. The mystery baby had begun to cry again from hunger, Pollyanna feared, and when she had tucked him into his carriage, she started off briskly in the direction Judy indicated, Judy trotting at her side.

It soon became painfully evident that, as a guide, Judy was a broken reed. After walking half a dozen blocks in an easterly direction, Pollyanna became suspicious.

"Did you go so far from home as this, dear? I can hardly believe it. A little girl who has been forbidden to cross the street alone."

"No, I didn't go so far," declared Judy, whether expressing an actual conviction, or in order to lessen her culpability, Pollyanna did not know. For fear that it might be the latter, she walked on another three blocks, and then turned to retrace her steps.

"Now, Judy, you must watch sharp, and find the place where the baby carriage was when you found it."

"Don't know where it was," said Judy crossly.

"Now think a minute, dear. What did you see near the baby carriage when you took it?"

"Two cunning little birdies," said Judy, brightening. "And they flewed 'way off."

After an hour of this, interrupted only by a telephone call to her home, to ascertain if anything had been heard from the police station, Pollyanna decided to return home, and wait for some move on the part of the child's mother. It seemed impossible that anybody should lose a baby of that age and do nothing. It was rather a relief, when she reached home, to find that her guests had all departed, with the exception of Mrs. McGill and Sadie. The mystery baby was in a violent temper, and Pollyanna decided to try the effects of a good meal. As she expected, the baby became amiable when the pangs of appetite were relieved, but Pollyanna looked wor-

ried. All three women were thinking the same thing and finally it was Mrs. McGill who put it into words.

"It would be too much of a coincidence for Judy to stumble on a baby someone had abandoned, wouldn't it?"

Pollyanna agreed it would be altogether too much of a coincidence, and Sadie backed her up with great emphasis, after which there seemed nothing to be said. They sat around in a brooding silence, and jumped nervously whenever the telephone rang. But the first time it was only Mrs. Warner to ask if they had heard anything, and the next time it was Mrs. Wilkins, with the same question.

When Jimmy came home from the train, Junior met him half way down the block.

"Got a new little brother, Daddy."

Jimmy stopped with a jerk, then recovered himself.

"What's the joke, son?"

"He can play with me when he gets some teeth," Junior prattled on, "an' the other baby can play with Judy."

"What do you think you're talking about, Junior?"

"Mother doesn't know where the babies come

from," Junior continued confidentially. "Do you think that queer bird brings 'em, Daddy?"

Jimmy did not enlighten his small son. He strode toward the house, Junior running to keep up with him, and the sight of Pollyanna, with the two babies, was proof that Junior had not been romancing altogether. And, on learning that Pollyanna was not planning to adopt an infant, Jimmy became quite optimistic. He argued that the most absent-minded mother could hardly mislay a baby and forget all about it, while the quality of the little fellow's clothing convinced him that he did not come from a class of society where parents are likely to desert their children.

But at midnight Pollyanna and Jimmy were still waiting. Mrs. McGill had gone home and Sadie had returned to the city. All the children, including the mystery baby, were asleep. Pollyanna looked pale and worn. Jimmy was sleepy and a little cross.

"We might advertise," suggested Pollyanna, with less than her usual sprightliness.

"In the Lost and Found Column, I suppose," jeered Jimmy. "Owner can have possession by proving property and paying charges!"

"It's just too awful," declared Pollyanna, a

catch in her voice, "to think that a darling little baby can disappear and nobody pay any attention. Where is his mother? Oh, what's that? Do you hear something?"

A car, roaring down the street, stopped with a jerk before the house. There was a sound of hurrying feet outside, and then the doorbell rang furiously. Jimmy and Pollyanna were on their feet at the first sound, and the door flew open before the distracted caller had time to ring again.

It was a young man at the door, and a young woman was just ascending the steps, her appearance giving the impression that she was behind him only because she could not run as fast as he The young man was incoherent.

"Is there—" he stammered, "is this the house—"

The young woman uttered a little wailing cry, and Jimmy answered the unspoken question of both.

"The baby's all right," he shouted. "Sleeping like a top. Walk right in."

Pollyanna had not lingered. At the first word she had shot upstairs, and the father and mother were hardly in the house before she was back with the sleeping baby. And then there was a great deal of laughter, and some tears, and much

incoherent chatter, and, last of all, the explanation.

The baby's mother, it appeared, had gone to town that morning. When she and her husband returned, a little before midnight, they had found a hysterical cook. She explained that the nursemaid had gone out with the baby soon after one o'clock, and had not returned. And then she had proceeded to tell them that the nurse was accustomed to giving the child a dose of soothing syrup, after which she would wheel the baby carriage into a little park opposite a small movie theatre, and leave it standing there, while she attended the show with friends.

The terrified parents had driven at once to the police station, where they learned that a baby was temporarily housed in Elsinore Terrace awaiting a claimant. And then Pollyanna told of the mysterious appearance of the baby in her upstairs bedroom. That Judy had wandered as far from home as the movie theatre, and then had wheeled a baby cab over the distance without attracting attention, seemed almost beyond belief, but, until a more plausible explanation was presented, this would have to serve.

"What I can't understand," said Pollyanna who, in her vicarious happiness in this family reunion, had quite forgotten how tired she was,

"is why the nurse didn't come back to the house, and tell what had happened, when she found that the baby was gone."

"Either she thought that some of my friends had taken the baby away, in which case she'd have been found out, or else she thought the child had been kidnapped, and was afraid to come back for fear she'd be held responsible."

"Yes, I see. Oh," cried Pollyanna from her heart, "aren't you glad you found her out before anything worse had happened."

The girlish mother admitted her thankfulness.

"I don't feel as if I could ever trust anybody again," she declared. "Why, my cook, a good, reliable woman, has known all the time what that creature was doing, and never told me a word till she was frightened into it. I feel as if I shouldn't dare leave the house again till the baby has grown up."

When at last they could think of going to bed, which was not till considerably after one o'clock, Pollyanna was in a thoughtful mood.

"Doesn't it show how careful you need to be about what you say before an imaginative child? Jamie's and Sadie's jokes about stealing babies put poor little Judy up to this. But, after all," she added, with a change of tone, "it's taught that nice, silly little Mrs. Fenton a lesson she

needed. It looks as if Judy were an instrument of Providence."

"Cheerful view to take of kidnapping," suggested Jimmy, but he stooped over the bed where his little daughter lay, and tenderly kissed the upturned cherub face.

CHAPTER XVII

SHADOWS

THE mercy of God hangs a curtain between today and tomorrow, that the present joy may not be shadowed by coming disaster. Pollyanna had been congratulating herself on the family health record for the winter, when an epidemic of influenza broke out with almost the virulence of its first appearance this side of the Atlantic.

Querulous voices in the nursery brought Pollyanna upstairs one afternoon with the full expectation of acting in a judicial capacity. But almost immediately she realized that, instead, the services of a Good Samaritan were required. Inez Richards was occupying Judy's little rocking chair, and something in her appearance held Pollyanna's attention captive from the instant of her entry. She crossed the room and touched the child's flushed cheeks. Inez lifted her heavy eyes.

"Your hands feels nice and cool," she murmured. "Mothers' hands feel gooder than other folks' hands."

"Mother, Inez won't play nice," complained Junior. "Every time she gets started, she stops."

"I don't believe Inez feels so very well," soothed Pollyanna. "I think you'd better go home, dear, and I'll go with you."

"And I'll go, too," shouted Junior, forgetting his resentment in his elation over the prospect of a walk with his mother.

"No, my son. Today I'm going to leave you to take care of Judy and the baby."

"Oh, dear," grumbled Junior, "I wish I didn't have any sisters. Girls are fierce. Somebody always has to be taking care of 'em."

Disregarding his ill temper, Pollyanna helped Inez into her coat, and put on her rubbers, as the child seemed incapable of doing it for herself. Her brave optimism had a hard fight against her growing anxiety. She blamed herself for not discovering earlier that Inez was really ill. The walk to the Richards' house, though not long, was difficult. Clutching Pollyanna's hand tightly, Inez dragged herself along, stopping at frequent intervals to complain of her back or her head or her stomach. Pollyanna's relief at reaching the house was quickly tempered by the discovery that the door was locked, and, though she rang the bell long and often, its summons brought no response.

The door of the next house opened, and a woman came out upon the porch.

"There's nobody home there," she said. "And it's not likely there'll be for an hour at least. Did you want to see Mrs. Richards?"

"I want to get Inez into the house," Pollyanna explained crisply. "She's feeling sick."

The woman looked commiseratingly at the small girl, sitting on the topmost step, her head bowed to her knees.

"It's a perfect shame," she sputtered. "Mrs. Richards is always saying what a wonderful maid she has, but that girl goes out nearly every afternoon, and doesn't come back till it's just time to get dinner. I've often wondered how poor little Inez managed, locked out of her own house."

Pollyanna might have enlightened her, but did not. Instead, she went to one of the windows opening on the porch, tried it and found it locked. She tried its twin with the same result.

"If you know Mrs. Richards well enough to go into her house when she's not there," hazarded the neighbor, "there's a side window that isn't fastened,—or at least I'm pretty sure it isn't. It's rather high up, but I've got a tall step-ladder."

"If I see somebody's house on fire," Pollyanna

replied tersely, "I don't have to know her especially well to break in and put the fire out. And this case is very similar. Shall I help you carry over the stepladder?"

The neighbor's presentiment that a side window was unlocked proved correct. Standing on top of a somewhat wobbly ladder, Pollyanna raised the window without difficulty. Pulling herself over the ledge was more difficult of accomplishment, and, at one time, the neighbor, seeing only a pair of feet kicking frantically, gave utterance to ear-piercing screams, due to a not unnatural impression that Pollyanna had landed on her head. Her fears were quieted, however, by the prompt appearance of Pollyanna at the window, right side up.

"I'm not hurt," she announced. "Thank you ever so much. Now I'll let Inez in and make her as comfortable as I can, till somebody comes."

The time of waiting was longer than Pollyanna had anticipated, though she made good use of most of it. Clearly bed was the place for a child as sick as Inez, and, after a very brief hesitation, Pollyanna undressed her and put her to bed. Then she bathed the flushed little face and did other motherly services, listening all the time for sounds below-stairs indicating the return of one

of Inez' natural protectors. She was growing nervous over her prolonged absence and yet to leave Inez alone was out of the question.

The front door opened at last, and footsteps sounded in the hall below. Pollyanna hurried down the stairs and found herself confronting Mr. Richards, who greeted her with a not unnatural surprise. Before she had finished her explanation, she found herself very sorry for him, for the color had risen in waves to the roots of his hair.

"Sorry that you should have put yourself to so much trouble. Inez is rather subject to these sick attacks. Indigestion, I imagine."

"Perhaps that's all." Pollyanna hesitated, and then added, "If it were one of my children, I should call the doctor; but of course, Mrs. Richards will know better than I whether it's anything to be worried about."

"I'm afraid my wife won't be home till late tonight," said Mr. Richards. "They've hired an accountant to come in the evenings to help them straighten out their finances, and the more they try to get them straight, the more tangled they seem."

Pollyanna murmured her regret, though if the truth be told, she was thinking less of Mrs. Rich-

ards' financial difficulties than of the child upstairs, turning restlessly on her hot pillow.

"My wife's a bright woman," insisted Mr. Richards, as if he challenged her to deny it. "And so's that Miss Rossiter she calls her partner. But the trouble is they weren't satisfied to begin at the beginning. My wife never knew where her money went to, and Miss Rossiter doesn't even know what money means. Some of you women forget that people need a preparatory training for business, just as much as they would for a profession."

"I'm afraid I shall have to go home now, Mr. Richards," said Pollyanna, who, however much she might have sympathized with Mr. Richards' grievance ordinarily, had on this occasion given him scant attention. "And I hope you'll excuse my entering your house so unceremoniously."

Mr. Richards blushed again, and Pollyanna realized that he had expressed his disapproval of his wife's business methods, in order to hide a hurt he could not discuss with a stranger.

"There's nothing to excuse, Mrs. Pendleton; but there's a good deal to thank you for. I realize you've been mothering my little girl. Thank you for it. I'm more truly grateful than I can say."

As Pollyanna passed the Lloyd's house on her

way home, she saw a doctor's runabout standing before it, and wondered whether Philip were ill. And next day Cornelia Hunt, from the back door-step, called to Junior that Arthur was sick and the doctor had just left.

"He's got a temper, Arthur has," announced Cornelia, clearly proud of the distinction. "A hundred and three, the doctor said."

"My mother'd spank me if I had a hundred and three tempers," sniffed Junior, by way of taking the wind out of her sails.

"Well, this is diffrunt. The doctor puts something like a stick of candy in your mouth—only it ain't to eat—and then you have just as many tempers as he says. And you don't get spanked for 'em, neither."

Pollyanna, watching her little flock with unwonted solicitude, told herself again and again that there was no reason to be anxious. It was undeniable that there was a great deal of illness. As a general thing the newspapers made light of the situation, but every now and then some terrifying news item appeared amid all the bland optimism, like an ugly face peering out from behind a curtain. Pollyanna assured herself that little was to be feared for children as healthy as hers, and as far as possible she kept them away from their usual playmates. Inez had proved

to have influenza, but the doctor considered it a light case.

One morning Junior woke in a grumpy mood. His answer to his mother's greeting was so nearly a grunt that she promptly felt his forehead and looked at his tongue. Then, convinced that Junior was in need of moral, not physical supervision, she suggested that his gruff "good-morning" left much to be desired. "I almost thought you must be sick when you spoke to mother that way."

Junior squirmed. "I said 'good-morning.' Do you want me to say '*good*, good-morning.' "

"I think you know what Mother means, Junior. Now, when you say 'good-morning' to Daddy, try to make some pleasant remark to go with it."

Junior was honestly impressed, and, when he encountered his father five minutes later, he made a brave effort to act on his mother's injunction. "Good-morning, Daddy. God forgive you."

"Well, I like that," cried the astonished Jimmy. "What have I done now?"

He continued to look a little suspicious, even after Pollyanna had hastily explained that this unexpected addition to the conventional greeting was Junior's idea of being pleasant.

But, though Junior ate his customary hearty

breakfast, later in the day he showed a moodiness quite unlike him. Pollyanna was seldom far from the nursery these days, and on one occasion she heard Junior inquire, "Judy, if I climbed up on the table and fell off, would you laugh?"

"Yes," said Judy with a tantalizing gurgle of amusement.

"But maybe it would hurt me awful," Junior cried. "Maybe it would break my arms 'n' my legs 'n' knock out all my teeth 'n' bump my head 'n' make my nose bleed."

"Boys falling off tables look funny," giggled Judy.

"Maybe it would kill me," screamed Junior in desperation. He began to cry noisily. "Mother," he roared, "if I fell off the table and got killed, Judy would laugh."

Pollyanna's laughter was the last straw. He threw himself into her arms and wept with the abandon of one who has lost the last vestige of faith in human kind. Pollyanna soothed him, and then decided to take his temperature. The rite was not a frequent one, for she dreaded above all things encouraging in her children an introspective attitude regarding their physical condition. But Junior recognized at once the ceremony to which Cornelia Hunt had referred,

and, when his mother removed the thermometer, he asked eagerly, "Have I got a temper, mother?"

"Oh, a very slight one."

"Arthur Hunt's got a hundred and three tempers. Have I got a hundred and three tempers, mother?"

"Oh, dear no!"

Junior began to cry.

"That ole Arthur Hunt. He thinks he can beat me every time," he sobbed. "I'm going to have a hundred 'n' 'leventy tempers 'n' beat him holler."

Pollyanna's heart sank. Such unreasonableness was by no means characteristic of Junior, and his ready tears showed, even more plainly, that something was wrong. She found one of their favorite story books, and began reading to him, and, when he climbed upon her lap and laid his head on her shoulder, she could not find it in her heart to put him down, though he was too heavy to hold, and the other children plainly disapproved of the arrangement. The baby uttered shrill whistle-like shrieks, and Judy eyed her brother with unutterable scorn.

"You don't look a bit nice, Junior," she informed him. "Your legs are lots too long, aren't they, Muvver?"

An hour later Junior's temperature showed a rise, though he was disappointed to find he still fell below Arthur Hunt's "hundred and three tempers." His sense of importance revived when his mother gently suggested his going to bed. It was necessary first to reassure himself on one point.

"You ain't sending me to bed 'cause I'm bad, are you, Mother?"

"Why, no, darling. I think you're not feeling quite yourself, and bed is such a good place for people who aren't very well."

"Nice ole bed," Junior agreed, and allowed himself to be led away. A little later his mother called the doctor over the phone, only to hear he had been out nearly all day, but that they would give him her message as soon as he came in.

When Jimmy reached home, Jiggs was whining at the front door, stopping every now and then to utter one of those peremptory barks which expressed his sense of outrage over being kept waiting. When the door was opened, he bolted in ahead of his master and up the stairs. Judy and the baby were in the dining room, and Jimmy stopped to kiss them before looking for Pollyanna. As he went upstairs he met a discomfited Jiggs coming down. But Jiggs was a resourceful animal. As Jimmy passed

him, Jiggs turned and again ascended the stairs, keeping so close to his master's heels that he seemed part of his shadow.

Pollyanna was in the upper hall and Jimmy at once began to tell his news.

"There's crepe on the door of the house at the corner. It wasn't there this morning so—why, what's the matter?"

He had just caught sight of her face.

"Junior is sick," Pollyanna said very quietly. "The doctor hasn't been able to get here yet, though I've phoned twice. There's a great deal of sickness, it seems, and the doctors are terribly rushed." She turned quickly toward the bedroom. "Will you please take Jiggs down, Jimmy, and see he doesn't get upstairs again tonight. He seems to worry Junior."

Crestfallen and resentful, Jiggs followed his master. Two had come up the stairs but three went down. At Jimmy's side, keeping step with him, moved one who was to be his inseparable companion for many a day, the chilling presence of Fear.

CHAPTER XVIII

AN ENVIOUS WOMAN

Serious illness in a family transforms the usual routine over-night as if some magician had cast an evil spell on the day and its duties. The things that had loomed large on Pollyanna's program, regular meals, clean napkins, spotless dresses for the baby, the daily sweeping and dusting, all in a moment ceased to count. It did not matter that Judy's little hands were grimy, that dinner was an hour late, that a grey canopy of dust hid the gleaming mahogany of the piano. Junior had become the center of the household activities, and matters which only yesterday had been of dominating importance had suddenly dropped out of sight.

Their efforts to secure a nurse had been unsuccessful. The epidemic was ahead of them and the available nurses had been requisitioned before they put in their claim. In her secret heart Pollyanna was not sorry. It would not have been possible for her to yield, to another woman, her place at Junior's bedside, and their failure

to secure a nurse saved her the trouble of demonstrating that she did not need one.

Like many a woman before her, and many who will come after, Pollyanna found herself lifted by the emergency above the limitations of her everyday self. The crisis had given her access to some reservoir of energy on which she could now draw at will. She slept little, and yet did not feel the need of sleep; she ate from a sense of duty, but she had no desire for food; paler than usual and quieter, steady of voice and dry-eyed, she went through the twenty-four hours like a creature of steel and electricity.

"I don't know how she's going to stand it, if the boy doesn't pull through," Jimmy said to Mrs. McGill. Jimmy himself was worn and haggard, and his neighbor noticed his shaking hand as he stroked the baby's thatch of hair. "She's so quiet and self-controlled that it might deceive anyone who doesn't know her as I do. But underneath that calm of hers—"

"Yes, of course," Mrs. McGill murmured. "The women whose tears come easily are the lucky ones." She added gently, "You mustn't be too anxious about her. If the worst comes, she's a woman of great strength of character and, besides, she has two other children."

"They don't seem to count now," Jimmy an-

swered drearily, "any more than I do. She hears the baby crying and she doesn't even ask me what ails her." He spoke without bitterness, but his sigh betrayed the heaviness of his heart.

"She's giving all there is of her to Junior," Mrs. McGill comforted him. "If anything was wrong with either of the others, you'd find they meant just as much to her as the boy does."

In this emergency in the Pendleton household Mrs. McGill had stepped into the breach as if she had been a sister, or at least a friend of many years' standing. For obvious reasons Sadie could not come to Pollyanna's assistance. Aunt Polly was in Florida and Aunt Ruth was ill. Accordingly, Mrs. McGill locked the door of her own house, shortly after breakfast, and devoted her day to aiding her stricken neighbors.

By the time Junior had surpassed Arthur Hunt's enviable record, he was too sick to care, and so lost forever the opportunity of exulting over his defeated rival. In his first day or two of fever he talked unceasingly.

"If I had a nice white flower," he told his mother, "I'd press it and send it up to God. I'd write a piece of paper, 'From Junior Pendleton, with love.' He'd like that, wouldn't He?"

"Very much," said Pollyanna steadily.

"I guess I'd have to get a bird to carry it up," Junior prattled on. "Or, maybe, if birds don't fly high enough, would the angels be too busy, Mother, to bother with an errand for a little boy?"

Pollyanna said she thought not, but, without waiting for her assurance, Junior was off on another tack, his voice hoarse and unnatural.

"God likes it when I'm good, doesn't He, Mother? And I make Him sorry when I'm bad."

Pollyanna murmured something in the way of assent.

"I'm bad a lot, 'n' Jack Horner, he's worse'n me, 'n' so's Arthur Hunt. But George Bailey, he's the baddest boy you ever see. Say, Mother, why don't God stop makin' bad little boys?"

After the second day there was no more of this verbal dreaming. Junior was lethargic, rousing with difficulty to drink his milk or take his medicine. Jimmy, tiptoeing into the room the moment he reached home after his day's work, looked down on the unresponsive little face, his own twitching with anguish. Outside, beneath the window, Jiggs paced restlessly up and down, whining unhappily, as if he understood something of the battle that was being waged in the forbidden room upstairs. And Pollyanna, deft and competent and quiet,

watched her first-born with dry, burning eyes.

There came a morning when Junior could not be roused to take his medicine, but lay inert in his mother's arms. The tired doctor, coming in soon after breakfast, said he would look in again at noon, and, after the second visit, as he went downstairs, he motioned to Mrs. McGill to follow him into the living room.

"If the little fellow upstairs regains consciousness and seems normal, he has a fighting chance for life; but the probability is that he will never come out of this stupor."

Mrs. McGill shivered uncontrollably, and the doctor pulled nervously at his stubby beard.

"I'm worried about the mother. She's too quiet. Something is likely to break if she keeps this up. I thought possibly you might do something."

"'Am I God, to kill and make alive?'" Mrs. McGill quoted bitterly. "Nothing can help her but the boy's recovery."

"A fit of crying would do her good," the doctor said. "I'm never worried about those patients who raise the roof. The louder they howl, the less I worry. But the little woman upstairs —well, do what you can for her."

Half an hour later, Mrs. McGill went up to the sick room. She tapped lightly at the door,

even though she knew that she could have pounded without disturbing the sick child, and entered noiselessly. Pollyanna turned and looked up, and at once, by her look of terror, Mrs. McGill realized that her own face had betrayed her. She went quickly to her friend and knelt down beside her. Pollyanna's gaze was fixed on Junior. She sat rigid, and the hand Mrs. McGill clasped in both of hers was icy cold.

"Pollyanna," she said, using that name for the first time, "you don't know how I've envied you for the last week."

The unexpectedness of it caught Pollyanna's attention. She turned on the other woman a look of bewilderment.

"This—last—week," she repeated, little incredulous pauses between the words. "You've envied *me*?"

"Yes, dear. How old is Junior?"

"He'll be six—Oh!" Pollyanna broke off, putting her hand to her heart, as if some unspoken thought had stabbed her. "You hurt me," she whispered, her lips grey.

"You've had him now almost six years. Why shouldn't I envy you, Pollyanna? Why, I'd give half of my life for those six years of love and laughter and pain and hope and planning. You have those six years to remember and live

over, when you're old and feeble, and the present doesn't mean much, any more. And what have I?" Her voice rose in a cry. "Emptiness! Emptiness! Childless women haven't such an easy time as others think. Years ago I read some lines a man had written and I said to myself that some woman must have told him how it felt. Don't you remember:

'How sadder far am I
Who have no child to die.'"

Pollyanna's face underwent a number of changes as she listened.

"Oh, it's true, it's true," she whispered. "I can be glad I had him, if only six years."

And then, all at once, the merciful tears were running down her cheeks. She sobbed uncontrollably and Mrs. McGill, throwing her arms about her, sobbed against her heart.

For a long time the two wept together, neither moving, and Pollyanna, her handkerchief pressed to her streaming eyes, did not see that Junior's eyes had opened. And so, when a cracked, feeble little voice broke the stillness, her heart almost stopped.

"Mother," Junior said faintly but distinctly, "where's Jiggs?"

CHAPTER XIX

PHILIP

As is often the case with healthy children after a serious illness, the rapidity of Junior's convalescence smacked of the miraculous. All the stored-up energy of his wiry little body, all the years of careful supervision and sensible training, counted in his recovery. He became hungry, cross, restless, impatient to be up and about, fretful, imperious, and, to Pollyanna's thinking, increasingly adorable. Relieved from the tension of anxiety, Pollyanna suggested a plant bursting into bloom in the spring. A stranger, passing her on the street, must have turned to look at her illumined face.

As if she had been away and out of touch with the neighborhood, she now learned of various happenings no one had attempted to report during Junior's illness. Although Inez Richards had not seemed alarmingly sick at any time, she was not making good recovery. There seemed some lingering infection that puzzled the doctors.

"It was rather lucky," Jimmy told Pollyanna, "that the gift-shop busted when it did. That night you took Inez home, Mrs. Richards didn't get back from the city till midnight, and they'd decided to close up. Richards thinks their bookkeeping was so wretched that probably the purchases of many of their charge customers were never recorded. It's more than likely that the things Aunt Ruth got the bill for had been bought by somebody else they'd lost track of. They'd done quite a flourishing business, but Richards says, if it had been any better, it would have ruined him. As it was he had to go down into his pockets to the tune of several hundred dollars."

But the most startling piece of news reached her one morning after Junior was able to be dressed and had practically returned to his normal activities. As Pollyanna went down to the kitchen to consult Nancy about the day's meals —again a matter of importance—Nancy was half-hearted in her interest In the first pause she said impressively, "I wonder what's going to become of that poor little boy. I s'pose the Lord has His reasons for the way things happen, but sometimes it's hard to see what He's at."

"What little boy do you mean, Nancy?"

"Why, the black-eyed one that brought Jiggs home the day of the party. He never was treated none too good, nohow, and now it looks as if the Lord Himself had taken sides against the poor child."

"You mean Philip Lloyd," exclaimed Pollyanna. "What's wrong with him?"

Then all at once she knew that Jimmy had mentioned some catastrophe connected with the Lloyd's the night Junior was taken sick. Absorbed in her own anxieties she had not seemed to hear it. She had never given a thought to the matter again, yet now her memory dangled before her a tantalizing half-recollection.

"Didn't somebody die in that house?" she exclaimed.

"Yes, Miss Pollyanna. He died first, an' today there's crepe on the door for her, and the poor little soul's left without anybody that b'longs to him. After you've got your growth, you ought to be able to stand up against trouble, but it don't seem fair to heap 'em up on a child, it don't, it don't."

Pollyanna sprang to her feet.

"Keep an eye on the children, Nancy," she said. "I'm going out."

In five minutes she was hurrying down the

street, while Nancy stood in the window, looking proudly after her.

"Bein' sorry for other folks' troubles don't go deep with most of us. If it kind of takes the edge off our appetites, that's more'n it's safe to count on. But with Miss Pollyanna it means gettin' up and doin' something, an' she don't let no grass grow under her feet, neither."

The neatly dressed maid, who admitted Pollyanna into the house on the corner, welcomed her with almost hysterical relief.

"You're Mrs. Pendleton, aren't you?" she began as she led the way into the reception room, opening off the hall. "I've seen you go by the house lots of times. I'm sure glad to have somebody to talk things over with, for I'm just about at my wits' end."

"Are you all alone here with Philip?" Pollyanna asked, and her quiet voice had a noticeably steadying effect upon the other woman. She had begun to cry, but she controlled herself, and only sniffed occasionally as she stood twisting her apron.

"Yes, ma'am, I'm alone here, and so everything comes on me. I could kick myself for being here at all. I knew from the start that it warn't no place for a girl what had been raised respectable. They was at one another from

early to late. I don't mean that he ever raised his hand against her, for Mr. Lloyd was a real gentleman as far as that goes. But there wasn't a day that they weren't fussing and scolding and finding fault. And she'd get to crying and he'd go out and slam the door."

Pollyanna listened sadly. "All for love, and the world well lost," these two had once thought. They had flung away honor, self-respect and the love of their children. And their folly had brought them to this ceaseless bickering and loathing of each other, like two prisoners chained together in a dungeon, chained till death released them.

"I knew t'warn't the place for anybody brought up the way I'd been," the girl reiterated. "I gave her warning three times, I did, and then she'd cry and take on and give me a blouse and a string of beads, and what was I to do? And besides, I didn't know how bad things were till after Mr. Lloyd died."

She lowered her voice impressively, Pollyanna listening with grave attention.

"Mrs. Pendleton, it seems that they weren't never married. His wife didn't get a divorce and he couldn't, and there wasn't no will and so this house and everything in it goes to the real wife and her children. She'd ought to have

known just how t'would be, but looks as if she wasn't a mite prepared. After Mr. Lloyd's partner came out and had a talk with her, she never held up her head again."

"Where is Philip?"

"He's 'round the house somewhere. Now, that's another thing, Mrs. Pendleton. I can't just walk out of the house after the fun'rel tomorrow and leave that child alone. And yet he ain't no more my business than anybody's else. I haven't had my wages paid me for two weeks."

Pollyanna stood up.

"Suppose you pack Philip's clothing," she said, "so it will be ready if I send for it later. I'm going to take him with me now."

"I'm glad of that," sniffed the girl. "I'm sure sorry for that poor kid. He ain't a bad child at all, Philip ain't, but he's kind of queer from playing alone so much, and sort of scared acting. I don't think Mr. Lloyd could stand the sight of him. She just worshipped him, but that didn't keep her from being pretty mean to him the days she was in one of her tempers." She raised her voice as she called, "Philip! Philip!"

After the summons had been several times repeated without result, they instituted a search. Philip lay face downward on a couch in the ad-

joining room, his small hands clenched, his body rigid. Pollyanna bent over him.

"This is Junior Pendleton's mother, Philip. I want you to get up now and come with me."

She thought at first he was going to disregard the suggestion, but suddenly a little tremor ran over him. He rolled off the couch, got slowly to his feet and faced her without raising his eyes. She was shocked to see how terror could change the face of a child.

The girl brought in his coat and overshoes and helped him into them, Philip submitting passively. Then Pollyanna took his small, cold hand in hers and led him out of the house that had scandalized Elsinore Terrace for so long. He trudged beside her without speaking or looking up, and she realized with stabbing pity his sense of helplessness. Whoever held out a hand and said, "Come," he had no choice but to obey.

She had started for her own home as a matter of course; but, as she reached the corner, she was moved by one of those impulses whose authority no true woman ever questions. Instead of going on to her own door, she turned down the cross street. She felt Philip lag, pull a little on her hand, and then follow on draggingly. And so, holding him fast, she led him to Mrs. McGill's door.

Mrs. McGill, moving about the house with the quick assured step of competence, caught sight of her and her companion, and flung the door wide before Pollyanna had a chance to ring. Her smile of welcome died on her lips as she looked down at the child's stricken face.

"Philip," said Pollyanna, pointing into the next room, "go in and sit down. I want to talk with Mrs. McGill."

Stumblingly Philip obeyed. He climbed into the chair in the corner and sat there awkwardly, his legs sticking out straight before him, his arms dangling limply, the whole rather suggesting a jointed doll, except for the tragic face above the stiff little body.

Pollyanna dropped her voice so the child could not hear.

"You know his father died three weeks ago. His mother died yesterday. He's all alone and no one to take any responsibility. The maid just told me that the parents had never been married, and whatever property there is will go to Mr. Lloyd's legal wife. He—the partner may have some plan for the child, but, if he has, he hasn't mentioned it."

Mrs. McGill's eyes were fixed on the forlorn little figure in the next room, but she said nothing.

"I suppose it's going to be rather hard to find him a home," Pollyanna continued confidentially. "People will be afraid of his heritage, though there's so much bad mixed in with the good in everybody's heritage that I think it's foolish to lay so much stress on that. Of course it's true that his environment hasn't been all one might wish. The maid says his father and mother quarreled dreadfully; but, if people can't control their passions, they're not likely to control their tempers either, so that's not surprising. And after all, he's very young."

Still Mrs. McGill did not speak, and, in spite of her intuition, Pollyanna began to look a little anxious.

"I was starting to take him home with me and then I didn't feel sure that was best. Junior is still very cross and irritable, and I wasn't certain he'd be just the host for a child who has been through what Philip has."

"My dear," cried Mrs. McGill, waking up suddenly, "of course you shouldn't have taken him home, full as your hands are, and after those dreadful weeks. You did exactly right to bring him here."

"The funeral's at ten o'clock tomorrow," whispered Pollyanna. "I thought I'd take him—"

"I'll go with you," Mrs. McGill said firmly. And with a sigh she added, "Poor woman."

"We'll probably see the partner there, and he'll know, if anyone does, what to do with Philip. I told the maid to get all his clothes together. And now I must run. I'll come for you tomorrow a little before ten."

"Yes," said Mrs. McGill. "We'll be ready."

She turned and went in to Philip, and Pollyanna stood with her hand on the knob, watching. The small boy did not seem aware of Mrs. McGill's approach.

"Stand up, Philip, and let me take off your overcoat," Mrs. McGill said kindly. "It's too warm in the house for an overcoat, isn't it?"

Philip did not answer. But he slid off the chair and stood like a tailor's manikin as she removed his coat.

"You've come just in time to help me out," continued Mrs. McGill briskly. "I haven't fed my goldfish today, and I'm going to let you do it for me. Goldfish are the greediest things. You drop a crumb into the water and they'll all rush for it. You'll laugh when you see them."

Philip lifted his face and Mrs. McGill looked down into his eyes. Then suddenly the boy began sobbing, hard, racking sobs that shook him cruelly, without the relief of tears. With

an exclamation Mrs. McGill dropped the overcoat to the floor and took the child in her arms. She sat down on the chair Philip had just vacated and cuddled him as if he had been a baby. Philip buried his face in her neck and continued to sob, while she crooned over him comfortingly.

"Poor little boy! Dear little boy! There, there, everything will be all right."

Pollyanna stole out of the house softly, and went home very well satisfied with herself.

CHAPTER XX

A SPRING MORNING

It was the springiest sort of a spring day. The sun was warm but the breeze had a piquant chill, reminding one that winter was not so very long over. The tulips and hyacinths were already in bloom, shaming the laggards of the garden, just begining to stretch in their dark bed-chambers and ask drowsily, "is it really time to get up?" And upstairs in the storeroom, with the windows raised to let in all the fragrant air the house could hold, Pollyanna was packing away winter clothes in moth-balls, and singing as she worked.

Judy, who had labored up two flights of stairs for the purpose of asking her mother to arbitrate on the matter of taking turns with the new swing, looming resplendent in the back yard, forgot her grievance in a suddenly awakened interest in what was going on in the storeroom. She fixed an appraising gaze on the moth-balls.

"Are they good to eat, Muvver?"

"Oh, no! They would make you very sick. You did right to ask Mother. Never taste anything you don't know about until you have asked Mother."

Judy tested the moth balls by the sense of smell, and wrinkled her small nose disgustedly.

"They're bad candy," she pronounced. "I'm going to frow 'em out of the window."

"No, Judy, they're not candy at all. Mother is using them to keep the moths away."

"What's moths?"

From the standpoint of anyone not a mother, it was not a particularly opportune time for a lesson in entomology, but Pollyanna patiently explained, while she went ahead folding garments and placing them in the open trunk.

"Moths are little insects that make nests in something warm, like fur. And then their babies eat holes in the fur and spoil it."

"Did they eat holes in Lizabef Hunt's fur rug?" questioned Judy, her eyes very big and round.

Pollyanna remembered a white fur rug she had seen hanging on the Hunt's clothes-line several weeks earlier, on which, judging from appearances, many generations of moths had feasted, for several patches as large as dinner plates were perfectly bare. "Yes," she said, pleased at

the evidence of Judy's keen observation, "moths spoiled that pretty fur rug, and that is why mother is putting away our winter clothes so carefully."

"But, Muvver,—"

Judy did not have a chance to finish, for just then a resonant voice called from below, "Pollyanna, Pollyanna Pendleton, are you dreadfully busy?"

"Not too busy to see you, Anne McGill," Pollyanna called down. The intimacy, which had started over the back fence months before, had developed so rapidly during Junior's illness as to make the formal address of first acquaintance seem rather absurd. "Don't come up," Pollyanna added. "I'll be down in a minute.

She restored to the trunk one of several trays scattered over the room, closed the lid, and ran down the stairs. Judy followed more decorously, as becomes one whose mind is occupied with a matter of grave importance.

The Mrs. McGill who awaited Pollyanna in the hall below had undergone a subtle change since the two first met. Underneath her vivacity there had always been a suggestion of restlessness. There were times when her gaiety had seemed forced. But this morning there was no hint, in her appearance, of discontent masked by

a brave front. She looked a woman whose zest for life was anything but a make-believe.

The boy who accompanied her had changed even more strikingly since Pollyanna had first seen him. He had ceased to be a tragic figure. By some beneficent influence he had been transformed into a wide-awake, every-day mischievous boy, noticeably handsome, but not otherwise unusual. At Pollyanna's advent on the scene he rushed at her and threw his arms about her knees in an embrace literally staggering.

"Aunt Pollyanna," he shouted, "I've got a new name."

The eyes of the two women met in an unspoken question and answer.

"Why, that's fine, Philip," Pollyanna cried, stooping to return the hug.

"My name's Philip McGill, and if Jack Horner says it ain't, I'll lick him."

"Junior hasn't any new name," Pollyanna said. "But he's got a new swing. Uncle John Pendleton sent it over from the city yesterday."

Philip started for the door on a run, then recollected himself, and stopped with ludicrous suddenness.

"Can I go and play with Junior, Mother?"

"Certainly, son," replied Mrs. McGill. She

continued to smile till he had slammed out of the room, and then turned on Pollyanna a look in which conflicting emotions were so blended as to render it difficult to classify. "Well," she sighed, "we've been and gone and done it. I feel as if I'd jumped off the top of the cliff. I'm wondering now how it is going to seem when I hit bottom."

Pollyanna laughed.

"You can't make me believe that. You don't look at all worried."

"Perhaps that is a trifle exaggerated. But honestly, Pollyanna, I'm terribly excited, and a little bit scared. All my friends tell me I'm taking such a risk."

"Of course it's a risk," cried Pollyanna. "What isn't? Look at marriage. How many men do you know of who have made great fortunes by backing a sure thing? They all took a chance, didn't they? Why, one's own children are a risk, like everything else worth having. That's life."

"Some of my friends tell me," continued Mrs. McGill, "that, while Philip is tractable enough now, he may be a hard boy to handle later."

"Perhaps he will be," Pollyanna admitted. "I know my children are not particularly easy to control, and I'm glad of it. I'm glad that they

keep me on tiptoe, that they keep me guessing. I'm glad it's going to take every bit of love and patience and wisdom and resourcefulness I can muster to bring them up to be the men and women I want them to be. I'm glad because it means that they have individualities of their own, and aren't just sheets of blotting paper, sucking up impressions. There are children you can be almost as sure of as you are of the multiplication table, and I'm glad they don't belong to me."

"You blessed optimist, you," cried Mrs. McGill, regarding her fondly. "If you ever move away, I'll follow you, if I tag you to the ends of the earth. I suppose you'll think I'm fearfully vacillating, but it really does make you a little doubtful of your judgment to have all your friends holding up their hands, and asking why on earth you want to give up ease and peace of mind for uncertainty and hard work."

Pollyanna smiled.

"Ask your friends why people try to climb Mt. Everest and get to the North Pole. If it's ease they're after, the easiest thing I know is to lie down and die. When I'm sick," she continued reminiscently, "I always hate the time when they give me milk and chicken broth,

things that go down too easy. I like something to bite on."

"And you refuse to be sorry for me because my days of ease are gone, and I'm not sure what's ahead of me?"

"You're embarked on one of life's greatest adventures," said Pollyanna. "I congratulate you."

Mrs. McGill laughed, and then suddenly her eyes brimmed over.

"I've told you all this," she exclaimed, "because I wanted you to help me, as you always do. But you know, Pollyanna, I couldn't have decided differently from the way I have. The day you brought him to me, a little forlorn, frightened boy, he filled the empty place in my heart. I couldn't have let him go if I'd wanted to." She looked at her friend suspiciously. "I believe that was what you meant, all the time, wasn't it?"

Before Pollyanna could either admit her guilt or deny it, the conversation was interrupted by the advent of two breathless boys. As usual Junior got his word in first.

"Mother, Philip wants to play that the swing's a street car, 'n' he's the conductor; but I want to play it's an air ship 'n' I'm the flyer. Ain't an air ship nicer'n a street car, Mother?"

"Don't you think," suggested Pollyanna, smiling down into the upturned face, "that, when Philip is visiting you, it is nice to play what he likes? Then, when you visit him, he will let you play what you like."

Reflection showed Junior the reasonableness of the suggestion. "Say, Philip," he exclaimed, turning to the visitor, "let's go over to your house."

The matter was at last adjusted by the exercise of diplomacy on the part of the two mothers, and the boys contentedly returned to their play. "I don't want to go home any more than Philip does," said Mrs. McGill, slipping her arms about Pollyanna's shoulders. "What were you doing when I came?"

"Putting away the winter clothes in trunks."

"Oh, let me help you. I'd love to."

"And I'd love to have you," Pollyanna cried. "I don't mind any kind of work, if I can have company while I'm doing it. I always envied those foreign women who carried their washing down to the same stream, and had a perfectly lovely time visiting, while they pounded the clothes clean."

Chattering animatedly, Pollyanna led the way upstairs, but, half way up the second flight, she halted and looked about her irresolutely. "What

is it?" asked Mrs. McGill, who was just behind her.

"That queer knocking. Don't you hear it? It must be something the children are doing in the nursery. I guess I'd better go and see what they're up to."

But the nursery proved a scene of unusual tranquility. The baby, safe in her pen, was absorbed in the attempt to get the foot of a rather large Teddy bear into a rather small doll's slipper, and she was so engrossed by the fascinating problem that she did not immediately perceive that her mother was in the room. Judy, too, was playing quietly, as she often did when Junior was not around. Pollyanna had frequently been impressed by the thought that the mother of an only child has very little chance to know how her offspring will react to a populous world, after one so largely solitary. There was the inevitable delay due to kissing the baby and making sure that the paint on a gaudy wooden toy did not come off; but, when, for the second time, they ascended the flight of stairs leading to the store-room, they heard again the mysterious knocking.

"For pity's sake, Pollyanna," exclaimed Mrs. McGill, her voice betraying that she was startled. "What *is* that queer noise? Isn't it spooky?"

Pollyanna made a hasty circuit of the third floor, and came back to the store-room where the perplexing sounds were most in evidence. But they were singularly elusive. Though they could be heard more plainly in the store-room than elsewhere, it was difficult to locate them exactly. They were muffled, irregular, yet startlingly distinct.

"A discipline of the Fox sisters would have no difficulty in explaining those noises," observed Mrs. McGill, as they stood looking around them in bewilderment. "I've always though it would be rather thrilling to live in a haunted house."

Pollyanna's answering laugh had a distinct tinge of vexation.

"Anne, instead of talking nonsense, use your wits and help me find what is making that noise."

"A rat playing hopscotch would produce very much that effect," mused Mrs. McGill. "Do you think it could be a rat, Pollyanna?"

"I've never seen a rat in this house, nor even a mouse," returned Pollyanna, taking the suggestion seriously. "I lay it to Sin's moral influence. Of course he's fed too much to be a good mouser. That noise doesn't seem to be in the walls."

"It isn't in the walls," said Mrs. McGill positively. "Hadn't you better look at the shutters. I'm convinced that no shutters ever made a noise like that, and besides there's no wind to speak of. But psychic investigators all agree that you can't claim an honest-to-goodness ghost till you've proved it couldn't possibly be anything else."

"I'm sure it isn't the shutters," declared Pollyanna, but she moved toward the window nevertheless. And then a squalling snarl, suggesting, as it seemed to Pollyanna, an extremely cross baby, brought her to a halt. Like the knocking, the cry was muffled, and, though perfectly distinct, seemed to come from nowhere in particular. Mrs. McGill bit a scream in two and tried to appear nonchalant, while Pollyanna looked about her wildly.

As her gaze fell upon the pile of moth balls, she realized at once that their number was appreciably diminished. Without knowing just why, she sprang toward the trunk where she had so lately packed Jimmy's winter overcoat, and flung up the lid. At once the top tray was curiously agitated. She snatched off the tray, and out leaped a black and white cat, clearing the edge of the trunk at least two feet. His appearance was the more formidable because

every hair on his body was standing erect, and his tail, in particular, had assumed the proportions of a funeral plume. Spitting in a fashion suggesting the feline equivalent for profanity, he crossed the room at a bound and took the stairs in a flying leap that defied pursuit.

"Sin!" gasped Pollyanna, staring after the transformed household pet, which in his present mood seemed about as amiable as a recently captured tiger. "How in the world did poor Sin—"

"Muvver," called Judy's reproachful voice up the stairs, "I put Sin in the trunk with some of the bad candy, so's the moths couldn't eat holes in him, like they did in Lizabef' Hunt's fur rug. What for did you let him out, Muvver?"

CHAPTER XXI

DISCOVERIES

The telephone bell woke them about two o'clock one morning, and Pollyanna had a bad two minutes, while Jimmy stumbled along the hall, too sleepy or else too excited to find the electric light button. The saying that ill news travels fast derives its authority from the assumption of most human beings that their friends can wait indefinitely to hear of their good fortune, while tidings of disaster must be rushed to them with all haste.

Pollyanna, sitting up in bed and listening with her heart in her mouth, was reassured by Jimmy's way of receiving the news.

"Good work, old man," he applauded. "Keep it up!" And then after a minute, "You can count on that. You know I'd have to lock her up to keep her away."

The receiver clicked back into place, and Jimmy came down the hall, chuckling.

"Another James Carew," he told Pollyanna. "Eight pounds and a quarter and everything

lovely. Of course the news was too important to wait until daylight."

"I'm glad he didn't wait," said Pollyanna. "It's worth being waked up to know that Sadie's baby is here and Sadie is all right. I wonder," she continued reflectively, "if they'll call him Jamie or Junior or James or Jimmy. Quite a choice, isn't there, dear?"

But Jimmy, burrowing down into his pillow, refused to be beguiled into a discussion of the fascinating theme.

Pollyanna had no difficulty in guessing to whom Jimmy had referred when he intimated that it would be necessary to employ force to keep somebody away from something. She justified his opinion by accompanying him into the city, that morning, to get a peep at the baby, and congratulate the proud father, who, like most of his kind, seemed to take a little more credit for what had happened than was altogether justified by the facts. A few days later, she saw Sadie, who, radiant with happiness, declared that she felt equal to anything.

"I can see that she's going to be the same sort of mother that she's been wife," Pollyanna told Jimmy. "Absolutely absorbed in her wonderful son. And that will be good for Jamie. He needs a little wholesome neglect."

"I suppose that's what accounts for my perfections," suggested Jimmy modestly. "If ever a man knew the meaning of neglect—" He shook his head as if his emotions could not be translated into speech, and Pollyanna laughed heartlessly.

It was a little shock to her the next time she saw Jamie to find him pouring over the genealogy of the Wetherby family.

"I'm interested to see just what sort of people were back of this little newcomer," he told her. "I care more about it on his account than I ever did on my own."

"Well, I never had the pleasure of meeting any of the baby's remote ancestors," Pollyanna replied gaily, "but I consider he's very lucky in his father and mother." For all her light tone, the incident troubled her. And when she told Jimmy about it she added, "I wish that miniature was in Aunt Ruth's hands."

"You've always made a mountain out of that mole-hill," Jimmy returned shortly.

Indeed, the miniature had been the occasion of one of their infrequent disagreements. It was during the absence of Jamie and Sadie in Europe that one day Jimmy had come home much elated to display a new acquisition, an old-fashioned miniature, set with pearls. The face

that looked out at Pollyanna was that of a Colonial belle, and Pollyanna, who had seen it before, gazed at her husband with an expression of consternation.

"Jimmy, what are you doing with this?"

"Your tone implies a fear that I stole it, my dear. I assure you to the contrary."

"But it's Aunt Ruth's great-grandmother."

"And my great-great-grandmother. So Aunt Ruth has just given it to me."

Pollyanna's exclamation implied dismay rather than pleasure.

"Why, if ever Jamie finds out—"

"I should think Aunt Ruth had done enough for Jamie, so it would be rather out of place for him to grudge me this little gift."

"It isn't that, Jimmy. But this is a family heirloom. If Jamie knew she had given you this he'd know Aunt Ruth didn't believe him to be her nephew."

Jimmy drew a long breath.

"I don't know but you're right about that," he admitted. "But what was I to do? I couldn't very well refuse it when she offered it to me, could I? Anyway, I didn't think."

Pollyanna looked at his rueful face and gave his arm an affectionate pat.

"Sorry to be such a wet-blanket, dear, but I

can't help being a little anxious. The older I grow, the more I hate these secrets. It's like walking on thin ice all the time. After all these years we wouldn't want Jamie to find out—"

"Good Lord!" Jimmy protested. "Of course we wouldn't. I'll put the thing in our safety deposit box—there's plenty of room yet—and forget it. I'm afraid I'd hurt Aunt Ruth's feelings if I took it back. And, besides, I—well, you know that the lady *is* my great-great-grandmother. I've given up quite a little on Jamie's account; but I'm hanged if I feel like giving this up, too."

Pollyanna looked at him proudly.

"Jimmy," she said, "I honestly think you're the most generous person in the world;" and her air of conviction made Jimmy feel well paid for surrendering his claim to be known as the descendent of a distinguished house.

But the miniature, safe in the vaults of a Boston bank, was destined to make trouble. The baby was about six weeks old when Aunt Ruth resolved on a family dinner party, with Pollyanna and Jimmy as the guests. They had eaten their way through several courses without a suggestion that the gaiety was not to continue, when suddenly a bomb exploded in the shape of a casual question from Jamie.

"Aunt Ruth, where's that miniature of great-great-grandmother?"

Had they had time to plan an answer, it would have been an easy matter to have avoided the catastrophe. Later, as Pollyanna thought it over, she devised a dozen replies by which his suspicion could have been allayed without the sacrifice of truth. But the question took Mrs. Pendleton quite off her guard. She had not realized that Jamie had ever paid any attention to the miniature, and the discovery that her gift to Jimmy had imperilled the secret they all had sacrificed to preserve added to her demoralization. She looked at him without a word.

"You know the one I mean, don't you?" asked Jamie, after a silence so protracted that Pollyanna felt a wild desire to scream. "That old miniature set with pearls. It struck me today that James Junior had a little the look of his distinguished ancestress, and I wanted to compare him with the picture and see if I merely imagined it."

Still Mrs. Pendleton said nothing, and Pollyanna saw with consternation that she had turned quite white. Stealing a glance at Jimmy, she discovered that he was blushing as hotly as if his conscience were weighed down by the theft of the unlucky miniature.

Pollyanna gallantly tried to create a diversion by saying, "I'm ashamed to be so ravenous, Uncle John, but I really think I could eat a little more chicken."

She had spoken too late. Jamie's eyes went from Jimmy's flushed and guilty face to Aunt Ruth's colorless one.

"What's queer about that miniature?" he demanded, his tone peremptory.

As if hypnotized, Mrs. Pendleton answered him.

"I gave that miniature—to Jimmy."

"To Jimmy! Why on earth—"

"Upon my word, Jamie," John Pendleton interrupted sharply, "I can hardly see that you have a right to take your aunt to task for giving Jim a present."

If it was his intention to end the unfortunate controversy by putting Jamie in the wrong, he was unsuccessful, for Jamie turned on him a face changed almost beyond recognition.

"I don't care how much she gives Jim, sir, but you'll have to own she made a curious selection. That is the picture of her great-grandmother. It ought to be kept in the family. Her nephew has the first right to it."

It was so dreadfully true that no one could say a word. Pollyanna was thankful that Mr.

Pendleton had disregarded her request for more of the chicken, for she realized that she could not possibly eat another mouthful of the delicious dinner. Sadie, pale and shaken, was staring with fascinating terror at her husband's altered face. Aunt Ruth looked on the point of fainting. Uncle John was frowning, and Pollyanna knew from Jimmy's expression that he was cursing himself for not having acted on her suggestion. Everyone was waiting for Jamie's next move.

He spoke with terrible deliberation.

"I'm inclined to think you're all in a secret which has been kept from me." He looked hard at Mrs. Pendleton. "Have you any information about that lost nephew of yours that hasn't been passed on to me?"

"Jamie, my dear son—"

"No, wait a minute." His voice was hard and unnatural. "I'm not your son. I'm either your nephew or else a pauper you reared out of charity. Which is it?"

"Oh, Jamie, for God's sake don't take it that way. Speak to him, John. Tell him—"

She broke off weeping, unable to continue. But Jamie had bent his gaze on Jimmy's perturbed face.

"I believe I see a little resemblance," he said. "I'm afraid I owe you an apology, Jim."

Never was a family dinner party a more hopeless failure. Trembling violently, Sadie sprang to her feet as Jamie rose and seized the crutches which leaned against the wall just behind him. He addressed Mrs. Pendleton with a bitterness very slightly veiled by the requirements of courtesy.

"I'll ask you to excuse me. As this is a family dinner, I have no right here."

"Jamie," Mrs. Pendleton wailed, "do you want to break my heart."

"I'm sure," said Jamie stiffly, "that your nephew will be able to console you."

He slipped his crutches under his arms, and swung toward the door. Sadie ran toward him, but he stopped her with a gesture.

"If you don't mind," he said, "I'd rather be by myself for a little. The fact is I married you under false pretenses. Our child is the descendant, not of one of the leading families of America, but of a nameless waif. Please give me a little time to think this out."

"Jamie!" Sadie sobbed, "let me go with you! Let me!" But, as he went on without answering, she turned an agonized face on the others. "He'll never forgive us," she cried, "not any of us," and she wrung her hands.

Pollyanna's sympathy for the disillusioned

friend of her childhood had changed by degrees to indignation. As she realized the imminent collapse of Jamie's air-castles, she could have wept on his shoulder. Now she would have enjoyed giving him a hard shaking. Her cheeks were burning and her eyes feverishly bright as she addressed Jamie's weeping wife.

"Sadie, stop crying instantly. You must control yourself." She added indignantly, "I don't know what you mean by saying that Jamie will never forgive us. I can't see that he has anything to forgive."

"He's been kept in the dark," cried Sadie, struggling valiantly with her tears. "No one knew what it meant to him to feel that he came of such good stock. He's spoken of it so often since the baby was born." She turned to Mrs. Pendleton piteously. "Oh, Aunt Ruth, is it really true that Jimmy—"

Mrs. Pendleton sat with the tears running down her cheeks, apparently unable to answer. And then Jimmy himself said gravely, "I'm very sorry, Sadie. I'd a thousand times rather Jamie had never found it out."

"But is it certain—or just a possibility?"

John Pendleton took it on himself to settle that point.

"A certainty, Sadie. But Jim, here, was will-

ing to relinquish his rights to spare Jamie's feelings. I don't see why, when we've all been ready to make every sacrifice, he should act as if we'd been in a conspiracy against him."

Pollyanna jumped briskly to her feet. All sorts of ideas were seething in her brain. The practical side of her was intensely aware of the spoiled dinner, of the wondering servants, catching the sound of tense voices, of the waiting salad and dessert. But that was present only in the background, as a dying man might be conscious that his bed was hard. She knew that all these people she so dearly loved were at a crisis of experience which might cast an ugly shadow over many a year to come. And it was all so unnecessary. Her blood boiled at this waste of happiness.

"I'm going to talk to Jamie," she cried. "He's got to listen to reason."

She ran out of the room and up the stairs. Jamie was occupying the room that had been his ever since he had first come to the handsome house on Commonwealth Avenue, a crippled boy in a wheeled chair. The picture of him, as she had known him first, took shape in Pollyanna's mind with such vividness, she almost forgot that, in the interval since, he had grown up, and become an author of considerable distinction.

Her knock at his door was peremptory. She stood waiting for a half minute, without results, and then knocked again.

A low voice replied, "I'd rather not see anyone, please."

"Jamie Carew," Pollyanna called, in very much the tone she would have used in correcting Junior. "Open that door this minute. I want to speak to you."

CHAPTER XXII

JAMIE GROWS UP

THERE is something in the expectation of obedience which compels it. The decisive ring in Pollyanna's voice affected Jamie as if he had been the small boy of whom she was thinking. He swung himself to the door and turned the key. Not until Pollyanna entered did he realize his mistake, and then, in an effort to retrieve it, he cried fiercely, "Don't talk to me, Pollyanna, don't speak to me. I can't stand comfort, even from you."

He had the surprise of his life. Pollyanna, turning her flushed face toward him, burst into an angry laugh. The shock of it made him momentarily lose sight of his sense of injury. He stared at her in stupefaction.

"If you imagine I came here to comfort you," Pollyanna explained, "you were never more mistaken in your life!"

She looked around for a comfortable chair, and, finding one to her taste, settled herself as if she had every intention of remaining. For a

moment Jamie stood irresolute, then he, too, sat down.

"If I had an idea of trying to comfort anyone," explained Pollyanna, choosing her words carefully, "it would be Aunt Ruth. I'm sure there's nothing that hurts like ingratitude."

Jamie started violently.

"I'm not ungrateful," he shouted, his voice harsh with resentment. "But I'm wounded. The people I've loved and trusted have been lying to me, living a lie for years and years. I've been wronged, tricked, cheated. I've built everything on the belief that I was the son of Doris Wetherby. Now that foundation has collapsed, and my life is in ruins."

Pollyanna looked at his twitching face, and sympathy tugged at her heart-strings. She waited till she could be sure of making her voice sufficiently matter-of-fact before she spoke.

"I understand what you mean," she said, "and I agree with you that you shouldn't have been kept in the dark. The straight-forward way is the only safe way. But you knew why the thing was kept from you, of course."

"Why, certainly," Jamie laughed disagreeably. "Mrs. Pendleton, after spending so much money on a pauper, under the mistaken impression that he was of her own blood, thought it

hard on the poor devil to inform him that he was as much an object of charity as any street beggar. And, since she had kept him so many years in a Fool's Paradise, she thought he might as well end his days there."

Again Pollyanna's matter-of-fact voice checked his growing excitement.

"You're a little morbid on the subject of ancestors, Jamie. People are willing to take you for what you are yourself, and nobody cares particularly who your father was."

"Don't you believe it," Jamie broke out violently. "It's true that I've made a certain success, and there are quite a number of people who feel a good-natured curiosity about a crippled chap who couldn't earn a living as other men do and so turned writer. But, if you think that it wouldn't count against me if they were aware that I don't even know my rightful name, that I've no idea who my parents were, why then you don't know much about life, that's all."

"But Jimmy put himself in just that place, and for your sake."

She shot the statement at him so unexpectedly that he was confused.

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Jimmy has good blood in his veins, as good as anybody in America, but mighty few people

know it. Those who do are all under this roof, with the single exception of Aunt Polly. He hasn't claimed for himself or for his children any of the advantages that his birth might give him or them. Jimmy was willing to be regarded as a waif, whose heritage was an unknown quantity. If anybody had made such a sacrifice for me, I think I should feel a little bit grateful."

Jamie winced.

"It was awfully decent of Jim," he said, after a moment. "I realize that he meant it kindly. But it hurts a man when his friends treat him like a child."

"But why shouldn't your friends treat you like a child?" Pollyanna asked quietly. "Tonight you've made it plain why they felt that necessary."

Jamie glared at her. Such a look from him would have stabbed Aunt Ruth or Sadie to the heart, but Pollyanna met it with an irritating tranquility. Apparently she did not have any idea that he was angry.

"This is just the sort of thing they were afraid of," she explained. "No, I'll take that back. I hardly suppose Aunt Ruth thought you would be angry at her. I can't imagine anybody would have gone as far as that. But she thought the certainty that you were not the lost Jamie

would be a knockdown blow. When a man can't stand the truth, Jamie, people are forced to treat him like a child. There's no alternative."

"But I could have stood it then," Jamie burst out. "I should have adjusted my life to that knowledge. Probably I should never have married—"

"That would have been nice for Sadie," Pollyanna commented. "You were just on the point of announcing your engagement, you see, when Jimmy found that he was really James Kent."

Jamie ignored this.

"I'm not unmindful of all Aunt—Mrs. Pendleton has done for me and I'm not ungrateful; but, when I realize how she has let me go on believing a lie, building on a lie, I feel as if I could never forgive her."

"That's your return for love, and yet you say you're not ungrateful."

"Oh, love!" sneered Jamie. "Why, when she found she had put a pauper in the place that belonged to somebody she cared for, she must fairly have hated me. It wouldn't be in human nature to do anything else. She's a good woman and she'd hide her feelings and go on trying to do her duty by me, but, in her secret heart, she must have wished me out of the way ten thousand times."

Pollyanna broke in on this, her voice as tense as his.

"Oh, you fool," she cried. "You utter fool!" And then as he stared at her aghast, hardly believing his ears, she rushed on, "Don't you see Aunt Ruth kept her secret because she'd come to love you even more than the one who had the first claim on her?"

Jamie continued to look at her stupidly. As men suffering from the shock of some great calamity may be acutely conscious of the prick of a pin, so Jamie, in the grip of a despair which made his life seem a hopeless wreck, was nevertheless annoyed by being called a fool, and by Pollyanna of all people. But, having used the term of opprobium, she proceeded to justify it.

"She'd loved Jimmy from the time he was born. When his father disappeared with him, it seemed as if her life had come to an end. She was a rich woman, even then. She could have had anything she wanted with one exception, and, without that, all the rest was meaningless. When I first came here she was the most unhappy woman I've ever known. And then at last, after years and years, the thing happened she'd prayed for and longed for and despaired of. She found the little lost Jamie, big and splendid, everything she could have hoped."

There was a moment's silence while they stared at each other dumbly, Pollyanna flushed with excitement, Jamie a ghastly white. And, when Pollyanna again took up her story, she spoke with a deliberation that lent a curious emphasis to each word.

"And when he came, that little nephew she'd loved and hungered for, his place had been taken. Oh, if Jimmy had been a small man, he'd have been resentful. It wasn't a question of depriving you of your rights. You had been legally adopted, and, in the eyes of the law, your position was as secure as if you'd been her son. But that wasn't enough. Jimmy must give up *his* rights, in order to spare your feelings. His aunt couldn't own him, for fear of making it hard for you. Of course it was his own proposition; but, even if he hadn't suggested it, and insisted on it, Aunt Ruth would have asked it of him. And why? Just because she had grown to love you more than she could ever love him. She had shielded you from so many things that she was ready to wrong her own flesh and blood to save you from a heartbreaking disappointment. If I hadn't loved Jimmy always, I believe I'd have fallen in love with him as soon as I knew how unspeakably fine he was about that. I don't think it ever occurred to him that he had any-

thing to forgive his aunt. No, it's you—you whom she idolized and sacrificed for—who are doubtful whether you can ever forgive her!"

Pollyanna checked herself. From a rhetorical standpoint she had come to a good stopping-place; but she was so full of her subject that her enthusiasm might have carried her on to an anti-climax, had it not been for a disconcerting interruption. Jamie's head had dropped forward on his chest, as her monologue proceeded, and, just at this point, a strangled sob escaped him. For a moment he struggled against his conflicting emotions, but for some time they had been gathering momentum, and now they were too much for him. He broke into a passion of weeping.

Pollyanna sat without moving. She had lived long enough to disprove the theory, absurd on the face of it, that the lacrimal glands in the human male are as useless as the vermiform appendix. She had discovered that the chief difference between men and women, in this respect, is that the former prefer to do their crying without a witness. She was sorry to be present when Jamie gave way to tears, but she was certain that a good fit of crying was the best thing that could happen to him.

Jamie's weeping was both violent and pro-

longed. Indeed, in spite of her philosophy, Pollyanna began to grow nervous, and wonder whether, in speaking so bluntly to one whose natural sensitiveness had been intensified by years of excessive consideration, she had done irreparable injury. But at length, to her great relief, Jamie's sobs became less frequent. She rose presently, stole to a strategic position in the rear, and patted his shoulder.

"Jamie, dear, I guess I'd better apologize. I'm afraid I've been rather brutal."

Jamie wiped his eyes viciously, blew his nose, and then, twisting his neck, looked up at her. From a conventional standpoint, his appearance was unprepossessing. His clear skin was blotched and mottled, his eyes bloodshot, his nose inflamed, and yet there was something in his look that gave Pollyanna pleasure.

"You'd have made a good surgeon, Pollyanna. What you said hurt, but it was necessary. I've been a fool, and worse. I've been a beast."

"You've been a baby," said Pollyanna fondly, and stroked his hair.

"Yes, I've been that, too. It's time I was growing up. Why didn't you take me in hand before this, Pollyanna?"

"Well, I've wanted to for a long time; but I

hoped your own baby would do the job instead. If you imagine," said Pollyanna ruefully, "that I've liked hurting you this way, you're terribly mistaken. It's going to keep me awake nights after I've cooled off."

Jamie put up his hand, caught hers, and held it in a grip that said more than he could have put into words, for these two friends from childhood suffered from the usual Anglo-Saxon incapacity to bare their souls in speech. Jamie, skilled coiner of phrases, was incoherent and stammering at moments like this.

"Pollyanna," he faltered, "you've been my good angel always. I owe everything to Aunt Ruth, but I owe Aunt Ruth to you. And you've never done more for me, dear girl, than you have done tonight."

"I'm glad you feel that way, Jamie." Now that everything was over, and victory was perching on her banners, Pollyanna was sorely tempted to cry. She swallowed her tears with an effort and went on, "If I'm your good angel, you're a lucky man, for you've got at least two others, compared with whom I'm nothing more than one of those cherub heads, with a pair of wings behind their ears."

Jamie gave a husky laugh.

"And I'm going to call them upstairs," continued Pollyanna, "and leave you to tell them it's all right. For it is, isn't it?"

"All right, after I'm duly forgiven.—Oh, no, there's one thing more. People must know that Jimmy is Aunt Ruth's nephew."

"Oh, that doesn't matter, Jamie. We're middle-aged, married folks now," declared Pollyanna, with a youthful giggle, which flatly contradicted her statement. "And there's no use raking up bygones."

"Yes there is. I have my rights, and Jimmy must have his. A woman with a heart like Aunt Ruth has love enough to divide between a nephew and an adopted son."

"You're right there," said Pollyanna. "I'll call her and your other good angel, and leave you to make them as happy as you've made me."

She said goodbye with a parting pat, and ran down to the drawing-room where four gloomy people awaited her. The men looked fairly savage as they sat silent and constrained. The women were pale and frightened.

Pollyanna's triumphant entry told the good news before she spoke a word.

"It's all right," she burst out. "He wants to see Aunt Ruth and Sadie right away. And it's a good thing this happened. There won't be

any more need to hide and evade and cover up. I'm so glad."

She carried Jimmy home almost immediately, guessing that it would be a painful ordeal, both for Jamie and himself, to meet again that evening. And, when they next were asked to the Pendleton's to dinner, they noticed that Jamie was now addressed as James. Pollyanna asked no questions but immediately fell in line. And Jimmy after one or two blunders, succeeded in doing the same.

"It's going to be hard to remember," Pollyanna confided to her husband, at the first opportunity. "But I'm glad he wants to be called James. The other is a little boy name, and it looks as if at last, Jamie—I mean James—had really grown up."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE LEMONADE STAND

Aunt Polly made very leisurely progress coming up from the South. The two friends stopped at every resort along the coast, and lingered nearly a month in Washington. And when, at length, they reached Boston and Aunt Polly came out to spend the day with Pollyanna, her nervous manner suggested she had something on her mind.

She came to the point early in her visit. She introduced the subject diplomatically, with an apology for remaining in Boston instead of making Pollyanna's home her headquarters.

"I feel I owe it to you, dear, to spend some time here; but poor Matilda is so dependent. It sounds like an exaggeration to tell it; but, really, when I suggested making you a few weeks' visit, she seemed almost terror-stricken. She simply cannot face the prospect of being left alone."

"It's lovely that you are such a comfort to her," Pollyanna said tactfully, ignoring the refer-

ence to herself and trying, by her air of enthusiasm, to put Aunt Polly at her ease.

"Yes, it's pleasant to know that your companionship means so much to your friends, but Matilda is a little too exacting. She's gone so far as to make plans for the summer."

Aunt Polly gave an embarrassed cough, and looked at Pollyanna out of the corner of her eye; but, to her relief, nothing in Pollyanna's manner betrayed a sense of grievance.

"What does she want to do this summer, Aunt Polly?"

"Why, she has suggested going West and taking the Alaskan trip. And then, by fall, if we were both well and in the mood, she would like to go on to Hawaii and later to Japan. Of course it would be very pleasant—"

"Very pleasant!" Pollyanna expostulated. "Goodness, Aunt Polly, can't you say more than that. If I were in your place I'd try to find some adjective that would do justice to the occasion. I should say it would be gorgeous and heavenly and perfectly scrumptious."

Unconsciously Aunt Polly breathed a sigh of such immense relief that Pollyanna bit her lips to keep from laughing aloud.

"It does sound alluring, I'll admit. I was always so fond of travel. I only wish," declared

Aunt Polly, plaintively, "that there were two of me, one to go jaunting about the world with Matilda, and the other to stay here quietly and help you out."

"You go ahead and have your good time while you can," laughed Pollyanna. "By and by, when I'm old and feeble, I shall need your assistance. At present I don't have any more to do than is good for me."

And then she proceeded to make interesting inquiries regarding the Alaskan trip, and was glad to see that Aunt Polly's earlier nervousness had quite disappeared and that, now that the dreadful secret was out, she derived considerable satisfaction from talking over her plans.

In order to atone for her long absence, and for the longer one in prospect, Aunt Polly spent many days with Pollyanna, generally coming out alone, though occasionally she was accompanied by Mrs. Aldrich. The latter's manner was propitiating. Evidently she recognized the fact that she had done Pollyanna an injury in taking away her prop and stay, and she lived in apprehension of Pollyanna's telling her plainly what she thought of such a theft. Pollyanna could never quite satisfy herself whether Mrs. Aldrich enjoyed these visits, or looked upon

them in the light of a penance, though, after one never-to-be-forgotten occasion, she inclined to the latter theory. This memorable visit fell upon an afternoon when Junior and Judy were operating a lemonade-stand on the front lawn, in the name of charity.

The lemonade-stand epidemic had broken out in the neighborhood about two weeks earlier. A kitchen table had appeared on somebody's lawn, and, on the table, a pitcher and an array of tumblers. At once every child in the vicinity had appealed for pennies and had partaken of rather weak lemonade to an extent limited only by the generosity of parents and guardians. The case was not sporadic. Almost immediately the disease became epidemic, and in a peculiarly virulent form. Jack Horner was the next victim and Philip came third. Then the Hamilton children contracted the malady, and the Hunts were the next to succumb. And then, greatly to Pollyanna's surprise, the disorder manifested itself at the Richards' home.

"Did Inez' mother say she could have a lemonade-stand?" Pollyanna queried doubtfully when Junior and Judy came for the inevitable pennies.

"Yes she did, Mother, honest. And Mary said she wouldn't have such goings-on in her

front yard, 'n' Mrs. Richards scolded her like everything."

Pollyanna found this news so gratifying that she gave the children double what she had intended. And then, realizing that this form of approbation was open to criticism, she suggested the advisability of using half the money to buy lemonade for children temporarily or habitually out of funds.

Of course it was only a matter of days before the epidemic reached the Pendleton household and, when Junior broached the subject one evening, Pollyanna had nothing to say against it. She hated to lessen a child's pleasure in getting what he wanted by granting a grudging permission. Accordingly, when Junior asked excitedly, "Mother, when can I have a lemonade-stand?" she answered, "When do you want one?"

"Tomorrow."

"Well, I don't see any reason—"

"Muvver," exploded Judy, "when can *I* have a lem'nade-stand?"

"Why, you'll have yours when Junior has his. If tomorrow is pleasant, it will be as good a day as any."

Judy looked resentfully at her brother. The two were devoted to each other, and quarreled as little as could be expected of normal, healthy

children, but every now and then Judy showed a twinge of unmistakable jealousy.

"Junior always wants to pour," she objected.

"I'll give each one a pitcher."

"But, Mother, Judy spills," Junior cried.

"That won't matter. It will be out of doors."

"Junior always wants to keep the money," continued Judy, still discontented.

"T'isn't my money," Junior shouted. "It's so poor little boys and girls who live in the city where it's awful hot 'n' don't see any birds or any dandelions or any green grass or any cows, or any—any—"

"I don't like cows," interposed Judy crossly.

"Well, anyway it's so poor children can go out into the country 'n' have a nice time. T'isn't *my* money."

"Both of you may have a little cash box," promised Pollyanna. "We will get Nancy to lend us her long table, so there'll be lots of room."

But, even with these concessions, Judy's manner suggested a sense of injury.

"Muvver," she whispered as Junior moved away, "Muvver, do you like Junior?"

"Like Junior?" repeated Pollyanna, really taken aback. "Why, of course. Don't you?"

"Ye-es," Judy admitted reluctantly. "Only—only I wish God hadn't made him that way."

"What way?" questioned her astonished mother.

"Oh, you know." Judy's expression indicated the keenest disgust. "All those freckles."

The following day the lemonade-stand was inaugurated on the lines Pollyanna had suggested. A large kitchen table, with a porcelain top, was set close to the side-walk, and two chairs placed back of it, where the charity workers could take their ease in the intervals when business was not rushing. A pail of lemonade, generously supplied with ice, and also with a soup ladle for filling the pitchers, occupied the center of the table. Junior was supplied with a large glass pitcher, and Judy was reconciled to the smaller size of the pitcher assigned her by the fact that it was blue. A dozen tumblers were arrayed before each child, and each was supplied with a small wooden box containing twenty-five cents in pennies to serve as change.

Pollyanna was anxious to train her children to be businesslike in their giving. She had seen too many women make a cake for a church sale, and then buy it back, to be satisfied with generosity so short-sighted. She had tried to interest Junior in the figures set down on a sheet of foolscap, representing the cost of the necessary lemons and sugar, and she had explained to both chil-

dren painstakingly that this cost must be deducted from the gross receipt, the Fresh Air Fund receiving the remainder.

Business was brisk from the start. Mrs. McGill and Philip were almost the first arrivals, and, having paused to patronize both vendors, stipulating with each that she should be served only half a glass, Mrs. McGill went indoors, leaving Philip to his fate.

"If I stayed and looked on, I'd become a regular wet blanket," she told Pollyanna. "Philip has a quarter in his pocket, and, of course, he'll drink it all up before he stops. If I were around, I should be continually suggesting that he had had enough. Don't you think it is better to have an occasional stomach-ache than to be continually repressed and checked and kept from doing as you please?"

Pollyanna was even more philosophical.

"Oh, his stomach won't ache. Not on a quarter's worth of lemonade. When you know boys better, you'll be amazed at the gastronomic feats they're capable of."

Mrs. McGill looked through the window at the gathering children, who reminded the onlooker of swarming bees, and her eyes were curiously bright.

"Pollyanna," she said slowly, "you've no idea

how interesting life has become the last few months. It doesn't run quite as smoothly as it did. It's not so easy to carry out my plans as it used to be. There are all sorts of little interferences, and sometimes I'm vexed and annoyed and cross. And yet there's a zest to life I never dreamed of before. It's worth something to wake up in the morning and wonder what the day is going to bring forth. I used to be altogether too sure."

Pollyanna's eyes met hers with a flash of understanding.

"That's just it. You've made life an adventure instead of a cut-and-dried affair, wild honey instead of dried beef."

"Philip was asked over to the Carey's Tuesday," said Mrs. McGill, lowering her voice slightly. "They had a little cousin visiting them and Philip was invited for supper. It pleased me tremendously, not that I'm especially keen about the Careys, but, if they're ready to overlook the past, other people will be."

"I told you so," interrupted Pollyanna. "Why, I predict that some day—"

But she never had a chance to complete her prophecy for, at that moment, Mrs. Richards came up the steps, turning, just as she reached

for the bell, to call, "Only one glass, Inez. Not another drop, remember."

The relief from business cares had not perceptibly altered Mrs. Richards. She still looked thin and worn, and, as Pollyanna inquired after Inez, she felt more concern for the mother's health than for that of the child.

"Oh, Inez is improving right along," said Mrs. Richards, leaning back luxuriously in a comfortable arm-chair. "She's still very nervous, however. I've been obliged—" She hesitated, apparently not quite certain whether to continue her confidence, but finally finished her sentence, "I've been obliged to get rid of Mary."

"Oh, have you really?" cried Pollyanna joyously.

"Of course I hated to let her go. She was wonderfully competent; but she was all the time nagging at Inez."

"I suppose she is one of the people," suggested Mrs. McGill, "whose scheme of things doesn't include children. Her idea of a happy home is one where nothing is ever moved and nothing ever soiled."

Mrs. Richards nodded. "Yes, that was the way Mary felt. It bothered her to have Inez run in and out of the house. She said she let in

flies. I suppose it did; but, after all, you can hardly shut a child out of her home in order to keep the flies out, too. She didn't like to have her noisy, or even to sing to herself, and it made her frantic to have Inez bring another child into the house. Of course that couldn't go on."

"Of course not," Pollyanna agreed. But she wondered how long it might have gone on, if Mrs. Richards had continued to be away the better part of each day. "You look tired," she continued sympathetically. "Housework is hard when you're out of practise."

"Oh, I have another maid," Mrs. Richards explained. "She's not as competent as Mary, but she seems good-natured. I dare say she'll do very well. I am rather tired, however," she continued; "but it isn't housework that's responsible. I've been taking a course in advertising in a correspondence school." She paused a moment, as if to enjoy the surprise of her hostess. "Of course I had to do something," she explained. "And nowadays advertising is an important business. I ought to do very well at it, after I once get a start. And one advantage will be that I can do most of my work at home."

Pollyanna looked wonderingly at her neighbor. The spiritual upheavals that come with the crises of life, and that shake us to the center

of our beings, leave us, when the shock has passed, little changed. The need of self-expression was as keen in Mrs. Richards as before Inez' illness had stabbed her awake to the responsibilities of motherhood.

Mrs. Richards' enthusiastic dissertation on the possibilities of her new profession was interrupted as, with a little cry, Pollyanna sprang to her feet.

"Oh, dear!" she exclaimed, with unmistakable consternation. "There's Aunt Polly—and Mrs. Aldrich."

A Packard car had stopped before the house. A uniformed chauffeur was assisting two ladies to alight. Pollyanna went to welcome them, looking so perturbed it was fortunate that both were too absorbed to give her any attention.

"Pollyanna, what does this mean?"

Aunt Polly spoke in exactly the tone she would have used years ago, had Pollyanna made her appearance with a half-starved kitten in her arms. And Pollyanna, mistress of a home and a mother of a family, replied as meekly as if she had been a small girl, called to account by her rightful guardian.

"Why, the children are having a lemonade-stand, Aunt Polly. It's for the Fresh Air work, you see."

"There are so many of them," protested Aunt Polly. "It will ruin the lawn."

"We made up our minds long ago," explained Pollyanna, plucking up spirit, "that if we had to sacrifice the children or the grass, the grass would have to go."

"And such a noise," objected Aunt Polly, while Mrs. Aldrich smiled uncertainly. "I don't know what the neighbors will think."

"Oh, the neighbors are all in the same boat," laughed Pollyanna. "Lemonade-stands to the right of us, lemonade-stands to the left of us, lemonade-stands in front of us have volleyed and thundered for days. So nobody is in a position to question why, you see. Come right in."

Aunt Polly, with an added disapproval, due to this disrespectful treatment of Alfred Tennyson, stalked into the house, and greeted Pollyanna's callers with unintentional coldness, reflecting not her attitude toward them personally, but her feeling in regard to lemonade-stands. Mrs. Aldrich continued to wear the agonized smile of one who, in trying to agree with two people who hold diametrically opposite views, envies the circus equestrian, who only has to ride two horses at once,—a vastly easier feat.

In spite of the fact that lemonade-stands were an old story in the neighborhood, the young

Pendleton's were liberally patronized. Not only did all the neighborhood children fill themselves with lemonade to the limit of their financial and physical capacity, but passers-by stopped for a glass, and an occasional automobile drew up to the curb. Nancy was kept busy carrying off the used glasses and returning them fresh and shining. The two cash boxes began to assume an oppulent appearance, alluring to the covetous.

But, if things were going well outside, there was less harmony indoors. Aunt Polly could talk of nothing but the lemonade-stand, the noise, the crowd, the trampled grass, the unpleasant prominence of the Pendleton establishment. And, since fault-finding acts on general conversation very much like a frost on vegetation, Pollyanna's other callers had little to say. Mrs. Richards was the first to leave, and she carried a reluctant Inez with her. Mrs. McGill went next and left Philip to swell the crowd about the stand. And Aunt Polly, having driven everyone else away, decided that the chauffeur had waited long enough, and that it was time for them to take their departure.

Perhaps Pollyanna's expressive face revealed more than she knew of her disappointment that the afternoon, from a social standpoint, had been so far from successful. Whether that or some-

thing quite different was the explanation, as they went down the walk, Mrs. Aldrich gave one of her rare exhibitions of individuality.

"Polly," she said firmly, "I'm going to have a glass of lemonade."

"Of lemonade?" repeated Aunt Polly, amazed.

"Yes, Polly. The day is warm. It—I—I believe it would be refreshing."

Aunt Polly looked at the table behind which the two children were standing. She noticed with approval the shining tumblers. Then her face went from one flushed face to the other, and her querulousness vanished in a thrill of pride. After all, these two beautiful children were of her own blood.

Mrs. Aldrich saw the change in her expression, and was quick to take advantage of it.

"Now, come, Polly," she said. "Have a glass with me. It looks so nice and cool."

Aunt Polly indulged in a shame-faced laugh.

"Of course it's very unhygienic out in all this dust," she said, "but I suppose I can take a risk as well as anybody else." She then addressed Junior. "Have you enough lemonade left for two glasses?"

"Oh, yes, Aunt Polly," replied Junior, his eyes shining. "We've got lots left, 'cause Nancy keeps putting in more ice."

"I see," said Aunt Polly, with a rather grim smile. "Well, ice water is as cooling as lemonade, I suppose. You may give me a glass."

"And I'll patronize Judy," said Mrs. Aldrich, patting the small girl's cheek.

Judy tilted the blue pitcher very slowly and filled the nearest tumbler with a deftness which surprised them all. And, while Aunt Polly disposed of her lemonade quickly, Mrs. Aldrich drank hers in little sips, punctuating her consumption by remarks on the warmth of the day and the refreshing quality of the lemonade. At length, having emptied her glass, she fumbled in her purse for two bright nickels, placed one before Junior, and the other in Judy's hand.

Judy looked at the coin with seeming perplexity. As a business woman, who had been selling lemonade for several hours, she should have had no difficulty with the bright nickel. Already a number of similar coins lay cheek-by-jowl in her cash box. After a deliberation whose intentness was felt by every on-looker, Judy extracted two pennies from her box, and gravely held them toward Mrs. Aldrich.

A laugh went the rounds.

"That's all right, dear," said Mrs. Aldrich, touching Judy's curls with a tender hand. "Your lemonade is five cents a glass, isn't it?"

"Ye-es," Judy owned, in a high-pitched little voice.

"Well, that was five cents I gave you, the same as I gave your brother."

"But I guess my lem'nade ain't so nice as Junior's."

They all laughed again, and Mrs. Aldrich, who found a real pleasure in drawing out this interesting child inquired, "And why not?"

Never having had children of her own, she had not learned the perils of curiosity.

"That's your change," explained Judy patiently, holding out the two pennies. "My lem'nade don't cost so much as Junior's 'cause—'cause Jiggs drank out of my pitcher."

Mrs. Aldrich's stricken cry suggested the wailing of a banshee. Aunt Polly echoed her in exactly the same key. Without looking back, the two fled toward the waiting limousine, while Pollyanna hurried after them, trying to apologize and express her sympathy, and finding the situation complicated by a hideous and all but irresistible desire to laugh. Jiggs, weary after a strenuous afternoon, was stretched on the grass in the shade, and he looked inquiringly toward the two ladies in flight. The cock of his ear suggested the opinion that human beings were a strange and unreasonable species of animal. Had

he known the cause of their perturbation, his conviction would have been confirmed.

From Mrs. Aldrich's point of view the worst had already happened, but, from the standpoint of those interested in the Fresh Air Fund, worse was to come. Poor Judy, perplexed by Mrs. Aldrich's failure to accept the change so generously offered, was still further bewildered when her mother subjected her to an exhaustive cross-examination to learn whether Jiggs had quenched his thirst from any receptacle but the blue pitcher. As the other children corroborated Judy's testimony that Jiggs had tried the lemonade but once, and then had been satisfied after a few laps, Pollyanna seized the blue pitcher and hurried to the kitchen. Junior looked at his sister and scowled.

"You oughtn't to have told 'em that," he scolded.

"Muvver says for me to tell what's true."

"Well, they didn't ask you if Jiggs drank out of the pitcher."

"Well, he did."

Junior grew impatient at Judy's failure to grasp the point.

"The next time I have a lemonade-stand," he announced, "I'll have it all by myself. You won't be in it."

"I will, too."

"You won't."

"I will."

"You won't."

No one could explain later just what had happened. In their exchange of defiances, neither Junior nor Judy realized that each "You won't" and each "I will" was emphasized by giving the table a jerk. But at length the porcelain top tilted and slid to the ground, carrying with it all its equipment of the lemonade-stand. The lemonade distributed itself impartially over a considerable area, giving a number of thirsty little grass blades the chance to compare the new-fangled drink with good, old-fashioned rain-water. A lump of ice, coming to rest atop a flourishing dandelion, must have given the unfortunate plant the impression it had made a mistake in the seasons, and it died without ever knowing better. The lawn was showered with small change, ranging from pennies to quarters, and, mingled with the coins, were innumerable bits of broken glass, all that remained of the water pitcher and two dozen tumblers.

While Pollyanna, with Nancy's aid, picked up the money and collected the glass—she refused to allow the children to help for fear of their cutting their fingers—Junior and Judy sat side

by side on the steps and wept in unison. It was not until the debris had been cleared away, and the visiting children had scattered to their homes, that their spirits showed signs of reviving.

"Mother." It was Junior's pipe, rather plaintive and husky still, but with a suggestion that hope was not altogether dead. "Mother, we got lots of money for the little poor children, didn't we?"

Pollyanna was silent for a moment. One of the hardest lessons for human beings to learn is that they must pay for their mistakes, and incidentally that is one of the hardest lessons for a mother to teach. Pollyanna looked at the little faces, still flushed and tear-stained, and almost weakened. Her voice was faint as she replied, "I'm afraid there is going to be very little for the Fresh Air Fund."

Both children jumped.

"Why, Mother," Junior cried, reproachfully, "we got lots of money."

"Why, Muvver," Judy echoed, "we got lots o' money, lots 'n' lots."

"Yes, but you forget you broke twenty-four tumblers and a pitcher. Of course, mother didn't give you her nicest ones, but the glasses cost a dollar a dozen and the pitcher cost a dollar, too. And, when you have paid for them and for your

sugar and lemons, I'm afraid there won't be much left for the Fresh Air Fund."

It was just as well that Jimmy did not come home to dinner that evening, for the discovery that only seven cents remained for the Fund, after all bills were paid, cast a shadow over the remainder of the day. And Junior's evening prayer contained this petition, "Oh, Lord, bless Jiggs, 'n' make him a better dog so next time he won't queer everything."

Late as Jimmy was, Pollyanna sat up, and told him the story of the day, almost before he was inside the door. And then, laughing softly, they went, hand in hand, to the children's room, and Jimmy kissed both of the unconscious little faces, even in sleep shadowed by the memory of the day's disaster.

As they stood looking down at the sleeping children, Jimmy's arm slipped around Pollyanna's waist.

"I always had an idea that the mothers of boys as big as Junior were substantial, middle-aged matrons, and I can't understand how you succeed in looking like a little girl."

Pollyanna nestled close to him.

"I suppose," she explained, "it's because I have so much fun as I go along."

A little crease showed between Jimmy's brows.

"I believe I promised you before we were married that I'd be a millionaire some day. I'm a little slow keeping that promise, dear."

"We're rich enough," Pollyanna answered, her voice eloquent of content.

"I'd hardly say that; but I do say there's nobody on earth I envy. Do you know, Pollyanna, I hear husky fellows, who look as though they ought to be equal to anything, whining about life as if it were a peculiarly obnoxious practical joke played on humanity. There's a man in our office who's always kicking because he has to work. You work harder than he does, but you don't seem to have discovered that it's a grievance."

"But I love it," Pollyanna exclaimed, and quoted under her breath, " 'God give me hills to climb and strength for climbing.' "

Jimmy put his disengaged hand under her chin, and turned her face up to his. The eyes of the two met in a long, candid look, and the thought crossed Pollyanna's mind that, if there had been a single reservation in Jimmy's happiness, she would have seen it then. And, oddly enough, Jimmy was thinking the very same thing in regard to her.

"Then you say, Mrs. Pendleton, that the Glad Game has stood the test of matrimony," teased

Jimmy, hiding the depths of his feeling under a jesting manner, like the good American he was.

An engaging twinkle showed in Pollyanna's eyes.

"No," she said distinctly. "Marriage has made it very difficult for me to play the Game."

"It has?" fumed Jimmy, trying to feel aggrieved, and failing utterly. "Then how do you account for the cheerful sentiments you have been expressing?"

"That's just it, silly. With this dear home and you and the children, there's so much gladness in every day that there's no incentive to hunt for things to be glad about. They're all on top, where anybody could find them. I suppose I'll need to keep playing the Game more or less as long as I live, but you've made it so easy, dear, that it's not as much of a game as it used to be."

THE END